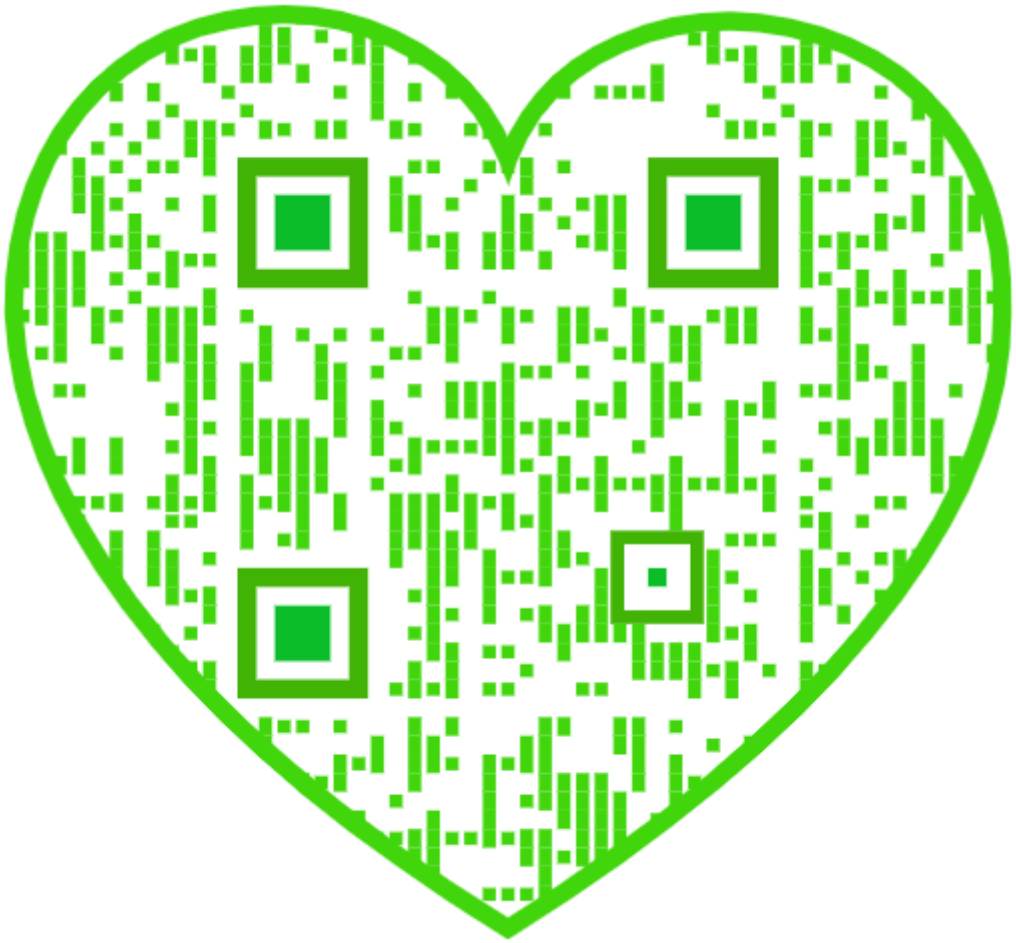


THE BADMINTON MAGAZINE

OF

SPORTS AND PASTIMES

VOL. IX.

THE

BADMINTON MAGAZINE

OF

SPORTS AND PASTIMES

EDITED BY

ALFRED E. T. WATSON

Volume IX.

JULY to DECEMBER 1899

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON
NEW YORK AND BOMBAY
1899

All rights reserved

CONTENTS OF VOLUME IX

JULY TO DECEMBER, 1899

A Day with a Seal ..... *Geoffrey Gathorne-Hardy* 647
WITH ILLUSTRATION BY LANCELOT SPEED

A Dish of Asparagus ..... *William Pigott* 523
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY F. S. WILSON

A First Grouse Drive ..... *Percy Stephens* 133
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY HENRY STANNARD, R.B.A.

A Haunt of the Canada Goose ..... *Arthur P. Silver* 191
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PHOTOGRAPHS

A Moorland Ride ..... *Mrs. Whitehorne* 636
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY MAUD U. CLARKE

A Painted Mule ..... *R. B. Townshend* 488
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS FROM BLOCKS KINDLY LENT BY MESSRS. A. AND C. BLACK

A Plea for the Fine-weather Sportsman ..... *G. H. Jalland* 686
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY THE AUTHOR

Across a Desert of Grass ..... *Miss S. Scott-Moncrieff* 166
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PHOTOGRAPHS

An Old Gladstone Bag ..... *Cyril E. Browne* 518

'Another Way' ..... *Owen Rhoscomyl* 47
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY ANTHONY DE BREE

Audhumla ..... *L. H. De Visme Shaw* 119
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY F. S. WILSON

Australian Eleven of 1899, The ..... *W. J. Ford* 437

Autobiography of a Fox-hound ..... *Frederic Adye* 503
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY MAUD U. CLARKE AND BY THE AUTHOR

Base-ball. See 'English and American Games and Pastimes.'

Big Game Hunting in Northern Spain ..... *Henry Goodale* 77
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PHOTOGRAPHS

325191

BIG GAME SHOOTING. See 'Big Game Hunting in Northern Spain,' 'Colorado in the Sixties,' 'Nimrod,' 'Shooting in the Sunderbunds,' 'The Grand Coup,' 'The Subaltern in India.'

BILLIARDS ..... *Frederic Adye* 658
WITH ILLUSTRATION BY LUCIEN DAVIS, R.I.

BIRDS OF THE SOUTHERN SEAS, THE ..... *Edward Roper, F.R.G.S.* 30
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY THE AUTHOR

BIRDS, THE CUNNING OF ..... *John Burroughs* 70
WITH ILLUSTRATION BY J. G. KEULEMANS

CAMPING MATCH, THE LAST ..... *William A. Dutt* 91

CANOEING FOR PLEASURE AND SPORT IN CANADA ..... *J. Macdonald Oxley* 297
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PHOTOGRAPHS

COLORADO IN THE SIXTIES: A REMINISCENCE ..... *M. O'Connor Morris* 681

CREATURES OF THE NIGHT ..... *A. W. Rees* 555
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY TREVOR HADDON

CRICKET. See 'Cricket Parlance,' 'Public Schoolmen in First-class Cricket,' 'The Australian Eleven of 1899.'

CRICKET PARLANCE ..... *W. J. Ford* 308

CYCLING. See 'On a Bike in the Bosch.'

'DAMES CHASSERESSES' ..... *Mrs. Isabel Anstruther Thomson* 533

DRY-FLY FISHING FOR SEA-TROUT ..... *W. B. Boulton* 21
WITH ILLUSTRATION BY R. WHEELWRIGHT

ENGLISH AND AMERICAN GAMES AND PASTIMES ..... *Price Collier* 262

FATE OF GEOFFREY DEANE, THE ..... *Horace G. Hutchinson* 591
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY LANCELOT SPEED

FEAT OF THE YOUNG MEN, THE ..... *The Hon. J. N. Kirchhoffer* 453
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY HENRY STANNARD, R.B.A.

FICTION. See 'A Dish of Asparagus,' 'Another Way,' 'Audhumla,' 'Autobiography of a Fox hound,' 'Field and Flood,' 'Galantuomo,' 'How We Won Our Match,' 'Some Experiences of an Irish R.M.,' 'The Fate of Geoffrey Deane,' 'The Princess,' 'Toffy's Triumph.'

FIELD AND FLOOD ..... *Anthony C. Deane* 322

FISHING. See 'Dry-Fly Fishing for Sea Trout,' 'Fishing at the Falls,' 'On a Shetland Moor,' 'The Gentle Art Modernised,' 'The Grand Coup,' 'The Little Witch Fly.'

FISHING AT THE FALLS ..... *Edward Roper, F.R.G.S.* 666
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY THE AUTHOR

FOOTBALL. See 'The Last Camping Match.'

FORTY MILES ON THE NECKAR IN A RACING FOUR ..... *D. D. Braham* 313
WITH ILLUSTRATION BY LANCELOT SPEED

GALANTUOMO ..... *Guy Cadogan Rothery* 251
WITH ILLUSTRATION BY R. WHEELWRIGHT

GAMEKEEPERS AND GILLIES ..... *Alexander Innes Shand* 281
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY H. M. BROCK

GEESE: AN APPRECIATION AND A MEMORY ..... *W. H. Hudson* 388
WITH ILLUSTRATION BY J. G. KEULEMANS

GENTLE ART MODERNISED, THE .....*Harold Macfarlane* 498

GRAND COUP, THE.....*Maurice B. Byles* 610
WITH ILLUSTRATION BY HENRY STANNARD, R.B.A.

GROUSE DRIVING.....*The Hon. A. Gathorne-Hardy* 576
WITH ILLUSTRATION BY HENRY STANNARD, R.B.A.

GROUSE MOOR, THE COST OF A .....*Leo Parsey* 42

HOW WE WON OUR MATCH .....*W. J. Ford* 182
WITH ILLUSTRATION BY H. M. BROCK

HUNTING. See 'A Moorland Ride,' 'A Plea for the Fine-weather Sportsman,' 'Dames Chasseresses,' ''Neath Summer Suns,' 'On a Herefordshire Bridge,' 'Wolfe and Washington as Sportsmen.'

IRISH WINNERS OF ENGLISH CHAMPIONSHIPS
C. B. Irwin (ex-Champion of Ireland) 64

LAWN TENNIS .....*George R. Wood* 202

LITTLE WITCH FLY, THE: A TRUE STORY OF A SALMON POOL
George Herbert Nall 540
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY LANCELOT SPEED

'NEATH SUMMER SUNS .....*George E. Collins* 153
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PHOTOGRAPHS

'NIMROD' .....*Ernest Bellecroix* 423
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY THE AUTHOR

NOTES BY 'RAPIER' 113, 232, 349, 466, 584, 695

ON A BIKE IN THE BOSCH .....*Susan, Countess of Malmesbury* 378
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PHOTOGRAPHS

ON A HEREFORDSHIRE BRIDGE 568
WITH ILLUSTRATION BY DOROTHY HARDY

ON A SHETLAND MOOR .....*H. Knight Horsfield* 210

PARTRIDGES .....*Percy Stephens* 237
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY HENRY STANNARD, R.B.A

PHEASANT, THE .....*The Marquess of Granby* 473
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY HENRY STANNARD, R.B.A.

POLO. See 'Soldier Players at Polo.'

PRINCESS, THE: A RECOLLECTION ..... *W. B. Maxwell* 355
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY MAUD U. CLARKE

PUBLIC SCHOOLMEN IN FIRST-CLASS CRICKET ..... *Harold Macfarlane* 147

ROWING. See 'Forty Miles on the Neckar in a Racing Four.'

SHOOTING. See 'A Day with a Seal,' 'A First Grouse Drive,' 'A Haunt of the Canada Goose,' 'Grouse Driving,' 'Partridges,' 'The Cost of a Grouse Moor,' 'The Feat of the Young Men,' 'The Grand Coup,' 'The Pheasant,' 'Wolfe and Washington as Sportsmen.'

SHOOTING IN THE SUNDERBUNDS ..... *Lady Westmacott* 443
WITH ILLUSTRATION BY E. CALDWELL

SOLDIER PLAYERS AT POLO ..... *T. F. Dale* 272
WITH ILLUSTRATION BY DOROTHY HARDY

SOME EXPERIENCES OF AN IRISH R.M.:
No. X. The House of Fahy 1
No. XI. Occasional Licenses 214
No. XII. 'Oh Love! Oh Fire!' 327
E. Œ. Somerville and Martin Ross
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY E. Œ. SOMERVILLE

SUBALTERN IN INDIA, THE ..... *Colonel T. S. St. Clair* 97
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY STANLEY BERKELEY

TOBOGGANING. See 'Winter Sports in the Canton des Grisons.'

TOFFY'S TRIUMPH: A TALE OF THE POLO FIELD ..... *T. F. Dale* 408
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY DOROTHY HARDY

WINTER SPORTS IN THE CANTON DES GRISONS
Mrs. Elisabeth P. L. Higgin 617
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PHOTOGRAPHS

WOLFE AND WASHINGTON AS SPORTSMEN ..... *A. G. Bradley* 397

THE

BADMINTON MAGAZINE

July 1899

SOME EXPERIENCES OF AN IRISH R.M.

BY E. Œ. SOMERVILLE AND MARTIN ROSS

No. X. THE HOUSE OF FAHY

NOTHING could shake the conviction of Maria, my wife's brown water-spaniel, that she was by nature and by practice a house dog. Every one of Shreelane's many doors had, at one time or another, slammed upon her expulsion, and each one of them had seen her stealthy, irrepressible return to the sphere that she felt herself so eminently qualified to grace. For her the bone, thriftily interred by Tim Connor's terrier, was a mere diversion; even the fruitage of the ash-pit had little charm for an accomplished *habituée* of the kitchen. She knew to a nicety which of the doors could be burst open by assault, at which it was necessary to whine sycophantically; and the clinical thermometer alone could furnish a parallel for her perception of mood in those in authority. In the case of Mrs. Cadogan she knew that there were seasons when instant and complete self-effacement was the only course to pursue; therefore when, on a certain morning in July, on my way through the downstairs regions to my office, I saw her approach the kitchen door with her usual circumspection, and, on hearing

her name enunciated indignantly by my cook, withdraw swiftly to a city of refuge at the back of the hayrick, I drew my own conclusions.

Had she remained, as I did, she would have heard the disclosure of a crime that lay more heavily on her digestion than her conscience.

'I can't put a thing out o' me hand but he's watching me to whip it away!' declaimed Mrs. Cadogan, with all the disregard of her kind for the accident of sex in the brute creation. 'Twas only last night I was back in the scullery when I heard Bridget let a screech, and there was me brave dog up on the table eating the roast beef that was after coming out from the dinner!'

'Brute!' interjected Philippa, with what I well knew to be a simulated wrath.

'And I had planned that bit of beef for the luncheon,' continued Mrs. Cadogan in impassioned lamentation, 'the way we wouldn't have to inthrude on the cold turkey! Sure he has it that dhragged, that all we can do with it now is run it through the mincing machine for the Major's sandwiches.'

At this appetising suggestion I thought fit to intervene in the deliberations.

'One thing,' I said to Philippa afterwards, as I wrapped up a bottle of Yanatas in a Cardigan jacket and rammed it into an already apoplectic Gladstone bag, 'that I do draw the line at, is taking that dog with us. The whole business is black enough as it is.'

'Dear,' said my wife, looking at me with almost clairvoyant abstraction, 'I could manage a second evening dress if you didn't mind putting my tea-jacket in your portmanteau.'

Little, thank heaven! as I know about yachting, I knew enough to make pertinent remarks on the incongruity of an ancient 60-ton hireling and a fleet of smart evening dresses; but none the less I left a pair of indispensable boots behind, and the tea-jacket went into my portmanteau.

It is doing no more than the barest justice to the officers of the Royal Navy to say that, so far as I know them, they cherish no mistaken enthusiasm for a home on the rolling deep when a home anywhere else presents itself. Bernard Shute had unfortunately proved an exception to this rule. During the winter, the invitation to go for a cruise in the yacht that was in process of building for him hung over me like a cloud; a timely strike in the builder's yard brought a respite, and, in fact, placed the com-

pletion of the yacht at so safe a distance that I was betrayed into specious regrets, echoed with an atrocious sincerity by Philippa. Into a life pastorally compounded of Petty Sessions and lawn-tennis parties, retribution fell when it was least expected. Bernard Shute hired a yacht in Queenstown, and one short week afterwards the worst had happened, and we were packing our things for a cruise in her, the only alleviation being the knowledge that, whether by sea or land, I was bound to return to my work in four days.

We left Shreelane at twelve o'clock, a specially depressing hour for a start, when breakfast has died in you, and lunch is still remote. My last act before mounting the dogcart was to put her collar and chain on Maria and immure her in the potato house, whence, as we drove down the avenue, her wails rent the heart of Philippa and rejoiced mine. It was a very hot day, with a cloudless sky; the dust lay thick on the white road, and on us also, as, during two baking hours, we drove up and down the long hills and remembered things that had been left behind, and grew hungry enough to eat sandwiches that tasted suspiciously of roast beef.

The yacht was moored in Clountiss Harbour; we drove through the village street, a narrow and unlovely thoroughfare, studded with public-houses, swarming with children and poultry, down through an ever-growing smell of fish, to the quay.

Thence we first viewed our fate, a dingy-looking schooner, and the hope I had secretly been nourishing that there was not wind enough for her to start, was dispelled by the sight of her topsail going up. More than ever at that radiant moment—as the reflection of the white sail quivered on the tranquil blue, and the still water flattered all it reproduced, like a fashionable photographer—did I agree with George Herbert's advice, 'Praise the sea, but stay on shore.'

'We must hail her, I suppose,' I said drearily. I assailed the 'Eileen Oge,' such being her inappropriate name, with desolate cries, but achieved no immediate result beyond the assembling of some village children round us and our luggage.

'Mr. Shute and the two ladies was after screeching here for the boat awhile ago,' volunteered a horrid little girl, whom I had already twice frustrated in the attempt to seat a filthy infant relative on our bundle of rugs. 'Timsy Hallahane says 'twould be as good for them to stay ashore, for there isn't as much wind outside as'd out a candle.'

With this encouraging statement the little girl devoted herself to the alternate consumption of gooseberries and cockles.

All things come to those who wait, and to us arrived at length the gig of the 'Eileen Oge,' and such, by this time, were the temperature and the smells of the quay that I actually welcomed the moment that found us leaving it for the yacht.

'Now, Sinclair, aren't you glad we came?' remarked Philippa, as the clear green water deepened under us, and a light briny air came coolly round us with the motion of the boat.

As she spoke, there was an outburst of screams from the children on the quay, followed by a heavy splash.

'Oh stop!' cried Philippa in an agony; 'one of them has fallen in! I can see its poor little brown head!'

''Tis a dog, ma'am,' said briefly the man who was rowing stroke.

'One might have wished it had been that little girl,' said I, as I steered to the best of my ability for the yacht.

We had traversed another twenty yards or so, when Philippa, in a voice in which horror and triumph were strangely blended, exclaimed, 'She's following us!'

'Who? The little girl?' I asked callously.

'No,' returned Philippa; 'worse.'

I looked round, not without a prevision of what I was to see, and beheld the faithful Maria swimming steadily after us, with her brown muzzle thrust out in front of her, ripping through the reflections like a plough.

'Go home!' I roared, standing up and gesticulating in fury that I well knew to be impotent. 'Go home, you brute!'

Maria redoubled her efforts, and Philippa murmured uncontrollably:

'Well, she *is* a dear!'

Had I had a sword in my hand I should undoubtedly have slain Philippa; but before I could express my sentiments in any way, a violent shock flung me endways on top of the man who was pulling stroke. Thanks to Maria, we had reached our destination all unawares; the two men, respectfully awaiting my instructions, had rowed on with disciplined steadiness, and, as a result, we had rammed the 'Eileen Oge' amidships, with a vigour that brought Mr. Shute tumbling up the companion to see what had happened.

'Oh, it's you, is it?' he said, with his mouth full. 'Come in; don't knock! Delighted to see you, Mrs. Yeates; don't apologise.

There's nothing like a hired ship after all—it's quite jolly to see the splinters fly—shows you're getting your money's worth. Hullo! who's this?'

This was Maria, feigning exhaustion, and noisily treading water at the boat's side.

'What, poor old Maria? Wanted to send her ashore, did he? Heartless ruffian!'

Thus was Maria installed on board the 'Eileen Oge,' and the element of fatality had already begun to work.

SHE'S FOLLOWING US

There was just enough wind to take us out of Clountiss Harbour, and with the last of the out-running tide we crept away to the west. The party on board consisted of our host's sister, Miss Cecilia Shute, Miss Sally Knox, and ourselves; we sat about in conventional attitudes in deck chairs and on adamantine deck bosses, and I talked to Miss Shute with feverish brilliancy, and wished the patience-cards were not in the cabin; I knew the supreme importance of keeping one's mind occupied, but I dared not face the cabin. There was a long, almost imperceptible swell, with little queer seabirds that I have

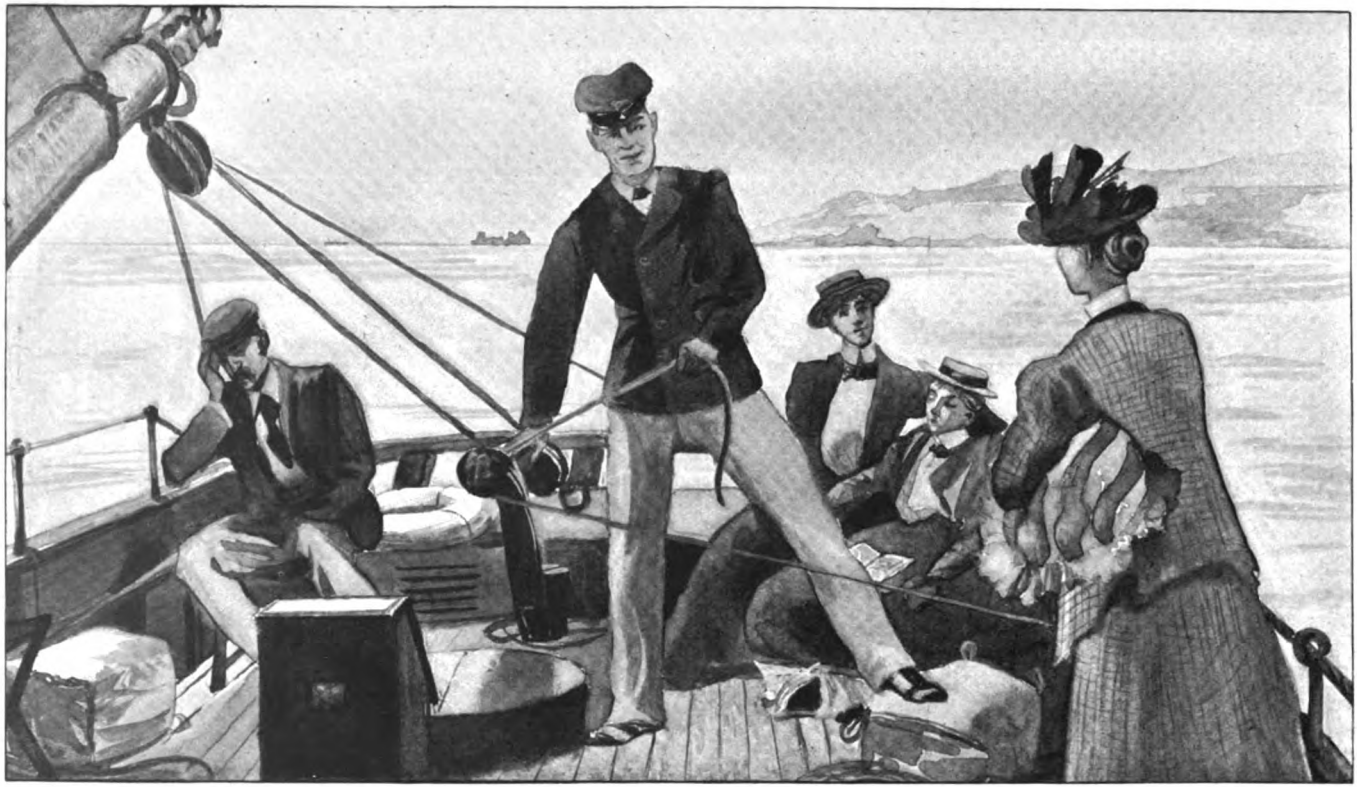
never seen before—and trust I never shall again—dotted about on its glassy slopes. The coast-line looked low and grey and dull, as, I think, coast-lines always do when viewed from the deep. The breeze that Bernard had promised us we should find outside was barely enough to keep us moving. The burning sun of four o'clock focussed its heat on the deck; Bernard stood up among us, engaged in what he was pleased to call 'handling the stick,' and beamed almost as offensively as the sun.

'Oh, we're slipping along,' he said, his odiously healthy face glowing like copper against the blazing blue sky. 'You're going a great deal faster than you think, and the men say we'll pick up a breeze once we're round the Mizen.'

I made no reply; I was not feeling ill, merely thoroughly disinclined for conversation. Miss Sally smiled wanly, and closing her eyes, laid her head on Philippa's knee. Instructed by a dread freemasonry, I knew that for her the moment had come when she could no longer bear to see the rail rise slowly above the horizon, and with an equal rhythmic slowness sink below it. Maria moved restlessly to and fro, panting and yawning, and occasionally rearing herself on her hind legs against the side, and staring forth with wild eyes at the headachey sliding of the swell. Perhaps she was meditating suicide; if so I sympathised with her, and since she was obviously going to be sick I trusted that she would bring off the suicide with as little delay as possible. Philippa and Miss Shute sat in unaffected serenity in deck chairs, and stitched at white things—teacloths for the 'Eileen Oge,' I believe, things in themselves a mockery—and talked untiringly, with that singular indifference to their marine surroundings that I have often observed in ladies who are not sea-sick. It always stirs me afresh to wonder why they have not remained ashore; nevertheless, I prefer their tranquil and total lack of interest in seafaring matters to the blatant Vikingism of the average male who is similarly placed.

Somehow, I know not how, we crawled onwards, and by about five o'clock we had rounded the Mizen, a gaunt spike of a headland that starts up like a boar's tush above the ragged lip of the Irish coast, and the 'Eileen Oge' was beginning to swing and wallop in the long sluggish rollers that the American liners know and despise. I was very far from despising them. Down in the west, resting on the sea's rim, a purple bank of clouds lay awaiting the descent of the sun, as seductively and as malevolently as a damp bed at a hotel awaits a traveller.

The end, so far as I was concerned, came at tea-time. The



THERE WAS A LONG, ALMOST IMPERCEPTIBLE SWELL

meal had been prepared in the saloon, and thither it became incumbent on me to accompany my hostess and my wife. Miss Sally, long past speech, opened, at the suggestion of tea, one eye, and disclosed a look of horror. As I tottered down the companion I respected her good sense. The 'Eileen Oge' had been built early in the sixties, and head-room was not her strong point; neither, apparently, was ventilation. I began by dashing my forehead against the frame of the cabin door, and then, shattered morally and physically, entered into the atmosphere of the pit. After which things, and the sight of a plate of rich cake, I retired in good order to my cabin, and began upon the Yanatas.

I pass over some painful intermediate details, and resume at the moment when Bernard Shute woke me from a drugged slumber to announce that dinner was over.

'It's been raining pretty hard,' he said, swaying easily with the swing of the yacht; 'but we've got a clinking breeze, and we ought to make Lurriga Harbour to-night. There's good anchorage there, the men say. They're rather a lot of swabs, but they know this coast, and I don't. I took 'em over with the ship all standing.'

'Where are we now?' I asked, something heartened by the blessed word 'anchorage.'

'You're running up Sheepskin Bay—it's a thundering big bay; Lurriga's up at the far end of it, and the night's as black as the inside of a cow. Dig out and get something to eat, and come on deck——What! no dinner?'—I had spoken, morosely, with closed eyes—'Oh, rot! you're on an even keel now. I promised Mrs. Yeates I'd make you dig out. You're as bad as a soldier officer that we were ferrying to Malta one time in the old "Tamar." He got one leg out of his berth to get up, when we were going down the Channel, and he was too sick to pull it in again till we got to Gib!'

I compromised on a drink and some biscuits. The ship was certainly steadier, and I felt sufficiently restored to climb weakly on deck. It was by this time past ten o'clock, and heavy clouds blotted out the last of the afterglow, and smothered the stars at their birth. A wet warm wind was lashing the 'Eileen Oge' up a wide estuary; the waves were hunting her, hissing under her stern, racing up to her, crested with the white glow of phosphorus, as she fled before them. I dimly discerned in the greyness the more solid greyness of the shore. The mainsail loomed out into the darkness, nearly at right angles to the yacht, with the

boom creaking as the following wind gave us an additional shove. I know nothing of yacht sailing, but I can appreciate the grand fact that in running before a wind the boom is removed from its usual sphere of devastation.

I sat down beside a bundle of rugs that I had discovered to be my wife, and thought of my whitewashed office at Shree-lane and its bare but stationary floor, with a yearning that was little short of passion. Miss Sally had long since succumbed; Miss Shute was tired, and had turned in soon after dinner.

'I suppose she's overdone by the delirious gaiety of the afternoon,' said I acridly, in reply to this information.

Philippa cautiously poked forth her head from the rugs, like a tortoise from under its shell, to see that Bernard, who was standing near the steersman, was out of hearing.

'In all your life, Sinclair,' she said impressively, 'you never knew such a time as Cecilia and I have had down there! We've had to wash *everything* in the cabins, and remake the beds, and *hurl* the sheets away—they were covered with black finger-marks—and while we were doing that, in came the creature that calls himself the steward, to ask if he might get something of his that he "had left in Miss Shute's birthplace"! and he rooted out from under unfortunate Cecilia's mattress a pair of socks and half a loaf of bread!'

'Consolation to Miss Shute to know her berth has been well aired,' I said with the nearest approach to enjoyment I had known since I came on board; 'and has Sally made any equally interesting discoveries?'

'She said she didn't care what her bed was like, she just dropped into it. I must say I am sorry for her,' went on Philippa; 'she hated coming. Her mother made her accept.'

'I wonder if Lady Knox will make her accept *him*!' I said. 'How often has Sally refused him, does any one know?'

'Oh, about once a week,' replied Philippa; 'just the way I kept on refusing you, you know!'

Something cold and wet was thrust into my hand, and the aroma of damp dog arose upon the night air; Maria had issued from some lair at the sound of our voices, and was now, with palsied tremblings, slowly trying to drag herself on to my lap.

'Poor thing, she's been so dreadfully ill,' said Philippa. 'Don't send her away, Sinclair. Mr. Shute found her lying on his berth not able to move; didn't you, Mr. Shute?'

'She found out that she was able to move,' said Bernard, who had crossed to our side of the deck; 'it was somehow borne

in upon her when I got at her with a boot tree. I wouldn't advise you to keep her in your lap, Yeates. She stole half a ham after dinner, and she might take a notion to make the only reparation in her power.'

I stood up and stretched myself stiffly. The wind was freshening, and though the growing smoothness of the water told that we were making shelter of some kind, for all that I could see of land we might as well have been in mid-ocean. The heaving lift of the deck under my feet, and the lurching swing when a stronger gust filled the ghostly sails, were more disquieting to me in suggestion than in reality, and, to my surprise, I found something almost enjoyable in rushing through darkness at the pace at which we were going.

'We're a small bit short of the mouth of Lurriga Harbour yet, sir,' said the man who was steering, in reply to a question from Bernard. 'I can see the shore well enough; sure I know every yard of wather in the bay——'

As he spoke he sat down abruptly and violently; so did Bernard, so did I. The bundle that contained Philippa collapsed upon Maria.

'Main sheet!' bellowed Bernard, on his feet in an instant, as the boom swung in and out again with a terrific jerk. 'We're ashore!'

In response to this order three men in succession fell over me while I was still struggling on the deck, and something that was either Philippa's elbow, or the acutest angle of Maria's skull, hit me in the face. As I found my feet the cabin skylight was suddenly illuminated by a wavering glare. I got across the slanting deck somehow, through the confusion of shouting men and the flapping thunder of the sails, and saw through the skylight a gush of flame rising from a pool of fire around an overturned lamp on the swing-table. I avalanched down the companion and was squandered like an avalanche on the floor at the foot of it. Even as I fell, McCarthy the steward dragged the strip of carpet from the cabin floor and threw it on the blaze; I found myself, in some unexplained way, snatching a railway rug from Miss Shute and applying it to the same purpose, and in half a dozen seconds we had smothered the flame and were left in total darkness. The most striking feature of the situation was the immovability of the yacht.

'Great Ned!' said McCarthy, invoking I know not what heathen deity, 'is it on the bottom of the say we are? Well, whether or no, thank God we have the fire quinched!'

We were not, so far, at the bottom of the sea, but during the next ten minutes the chances seemed in favour of our getting there. The yacht had run her bows upon a sunken ridge of rock, and after a period of feminine indecision as to whether she were going to slide off again, or roll over into deep water, she elected to stay where she was, and the gig was lowered with all speed, in order to tow her off before the tide left her.

My recollection of this interval is but hazy, but I can certify that in ten minutes I had swept together an assortment of necessaries and knotted them into my counterpane, had broken the string of my eyeglass, and lost my silver matchbox; had found Philippa's curling tongs and put them in my pocket; had carted all the luggage on deck; had then applied myself to the manly duty of reassuring the ladies, and had found Miss Shute was merely bored, Philippa enthusiastically anxious to be allowed to help to pull the gig, and Miss Sally radiantly restored to health and spirits by the cessation of movement and the probability of an early escape from the yacht.

The rain had, with its usual opportuneness, begun again; we stood in it under umbrellas, and watched the gig jumping on its tow-rope like a dog on a string, as its crew plied the labouring oar in futile endeavour to move the 'Eileen Oge.' We had run on the rock at half-tide, and the increasing slant of the deck as the tide fell brought home to us the pleasing probability that at low water—viz. about 2 A.M.—we should roll off the rock and go to the bottom. Had Bernard Shute wished to show himself in the most advantageous light to Miss Sally he could scarcely have bettered the situation. I looked on in helpless respect while he whom I had known as the scourge of the hunting field, the terror of the shooting party, rose to the top of a difficult position and kept there, and my respect was, if possible, increased by the presence of mind with which he availed himself of all critical moments to place a protecting arm round Miss Knox.

By about 1 A.M. the two gaffs with which Bernard had contrived to shore up the slowly heeling yacht began to show signs of yielding, and, in approved shipwreck fashion, we took to the boats, the yacht's crew in the gig remaining in attendance on what seemed likely to be the last moments of the 'Eileen Oge,' while we, in the dinghy, sought for the harbour. Owing to the tilt of the yacht's deck, and the roughness of the broken water round her, getting into the boat was no mean feat of gymnastics. Miss Sally did it like a bird, alighting in the inevitable arms of Bernard; Miss Shute followed very badly, but, by innate force of

McCARTHY DRAGGED THE STRIP OF CARPET FROM THE CABIN FLOOR AND THREW IT ON THE BLAZE

character, successfully; Philippa, who was enjoying every moment of her shipwreck, came last, launching herself into the dinghy with my silver shoe-horn clutched in one hand, and in the other the tea-basket. I heard the hollow clank of its tin cups as she sprang, and appreciated the heroism with which Bernard received one of its corners in his waist. How or when Maria left the yacht I know not, but when I applied myself to the bow oar I led off with three crabs, owing to the devotion with which she thrust her head into my lap.

I am no judge of these matters, but in my opinion we ought to have been swamped several times during that row. There was nothing but the phosphorus of breaking waves to tell us where the rocks were, and nothing to show where the harbour was except a solitary light, a masthead light, as we supposed. The skipper had assured us that we could not go wrong if we kept 'a westerly course with a little northing in it;' but it seemed simpler to steer for the light, and we did so. The dinghy climbed along over the waves with an agility that was safer than it felt; the rain fell without haste and without rest, the oars were as inflexible as crowbars, and somewhat resembled them in shape and weight; nevertheless, it was Elysium when compared with the afternoon leisure of the deck of the 'Eileen Oge.'

At last we came, unexplainably, into smooth water, and it was at about this time that we were first aware that the darkness was less dense than it had been, and that the rain had ceased. By imperceptible degrees a greyness touched the back of the waves, more a dreariness than a dawn, but more welcome than thousands of gold and silver. I looked over my shoulder and discerned vague bulky things ahead; as I did so, my oar was suddenly wrapped in seaweed. We crept on; Maria stood up with her paws on the gunwale, and whined in high agitation. The dark objects ahead resolved themselves into rocks, and without more ado Maria pitched herself into the water. In half a minute we heard her shaking herself on shore. We slid on; the water swelled under the dinghy, and lifted her keel on to grating gravel.

'We couldn't have done it better if we'd been the Hydrographer Royal,' said Bernard, wading knee-deep in a light wash of foam, with the painter in his hand; 'but all the same, that masthead light is someone's bedroom candle!'

We landed, hauled up the boat, and then feebly sat down on our belongings to review the situation, and Maria came and shook herself over each of us in turn. We had run into a little

cove, guided by the philanthropic beam of a candle in the upper window of a house about a hundred yards away. The candle still burned on, and the anæmic daylight exhibited to us our surroundings, and we debated as to whether we could at 2.45 A.M. present ourselves as objects of compassion to the owner of the candle. I need hardly say that it was the ladies who decided on making the attempt, having, like most of their sex, a courage incomparably superior to ours in such matters; Bernard and I had not a grain of genuine compunction in our souls, but we failed in nerve.

We trailed up from the cove, laden with emigrants' bundles, stumbling on wet rocks in the half-light, and succeeded in making our way to the house.

It was a small two-storied building, of that hideous breed of architecture usually dedicated to the rectories of the Irish Church; we felt that there was something friendly in the presence of a pair of carpet slippers in the porch, but there was a hint of exclusiveness in the fact that there was no knocker and the bell was broken. The light still burned in the upper window, and with a faltering hand I flung gravel at the glass. This summons was appallingly responded to by a shriek; there was a flutter of white at the panes, and the candle was extinguished.

'Come away!' exclaimed Miss Shute, 'it's a lunatic asylum!'

We stood our ground, however, and presently heard a footstep within, a blind was poked aside in another window, and we were inspected by an unseen inmate; then someone came downstairs, and the hall door was opened by a small man with a bald head and a long sandy beard. He was attired in a brief dressing-gown, and on his shoulder sat, like an angry ghost, a large white cockatoo. Its crest was up on end, its beak was a good two inches long and curved like a Malay kris; its claws gripped the little man's shoulder. Maria uttered in the background a low and thunderous growl.

'Don't take any notice of the bird, please,' said the little man nervously, seeing our united gaze fixed upon this apparition; 'he's extremely fierce if annoyed.'

The majority of our party here melted away to either side of the hall door, and I was left to do the explaining. The tale of our misfortunes had its due effect, and we were ushered into a small drawing-room, our host holding open the door for us, like a nightmare footman with bare shins, a gnome-like bald head, and an unclean spirit swaying on his shoulder. He opened the shutters, and we sat decorously round the room, as at an after-

noon party, while the situation was further expounded on both sides. Our entertainer, indeed, favoured us with the leading items of his family history, amongst them the facts that he was a Dr. Fahy from Cork, who had taken somebody's rectory for the summer, and had been prevailed on by some of his patients to permit them to join him as paying guests.

'I said it was a lunatic asylum,' murmured Miss Shute to me.

'In point of fact,' went on our host, 'there isn't an empty room in the house, which is why I can only offer your party the use of this room and the kitchen fire, which I make a point of keeping burning all night.'

OUR ENTERTAINER

He leaned back complacently in his chair, and crossed his legs; then, obviously remembering his costume, sat bolt upright again. We owed the guiding beams of the candle to the owner of the cockatoo, an old Mrs. Buck, who was, we gathered, the most paying of all the patients, and also, obviously, the one most feared and cherished by Dr. Fahy. 'She has a candle burning all night for the bird, and her door open to let him walk about the house when he likes,' said Dr. Fahy; 'indeed, I may say her passion for him amounts to dementia. He's very fond of me, and Mrs. Fahy's always telling me I should be thankful, as whatever he did we'd be bound to put up with it!'

Dr. Fahy had evidently a turn for conversation that was unaffected by circumstance; the first beams of the early sun were lighting up the rep chair covers before the door closed upon his brown dressing-gown, and upon the stately white back of the cockatoo, and the demoniac possession of laughter that had wrought in us during the interview burst forth unchecked. It was most painful and exhausting, as such laughter always is; but by far the most serious part of it was that Miss Sally, who was sitting in the window, somehow drove her elbow through a pane

of glass, and Bernard, in pulling down the blind to conceal the damage, tore it off the roller.

There followed on this catastrophe a period during which reason tottered and Maria barked furiously. Philippa was the first to pull herself together and to suggest an adjournment to the kitchen fire that, in honour of the paying guests, was never quenched, and, respecting the repose of the household, we proceeded thither with a stealth that convinced Maria we were engaged in a rat hunt. The boots of paying guests littered the floor, the débris of their last repast covered the table; a cat in some unseen fastness crooned a war song to Maria, who feigned unconsciousness and fell to scientific research in the scullery.

We roasted our boots at the range, and Bernard, with all a sailor's gift for exploration and theft, prowled in noisome purlieus and emerged with a jug of milk and a lump of salt butter. No one who has not been a burglar can at all realise what it was to roam through Dr. Fahy's basement story, with the rookery of paying guests asleep above, and to feel that, so far, we had repaid his confidence by breaking a pane of glass and a blind, and putting the scullery tap out of order. I have always maintained that there was something wrong with it before I touched it, but the fact remains that when I had filled Philippa's kettle, no human power could prevail upon it to stop flowing. For all I know to the contrary it is running still.

It was in the course of our furtive return to the drawing-room that we were again confronted by Mrs. Buck's cockatoo. It was standing in malign meditation on the stairs, and on seeing us it rose, without a word of warning, upon the wing, and with a long screech flung itself at Miss Sally's golden-red head, which a ray of sunlight had chanced to illumine. There was a moment of stampede, as the selected victim, pursued by the cockatoo, fled into the drawing-room; two chairs were upset (one, I think, broken), Miss Sally enveloped herself in a window curtain, Philippa and Miss Shute effaced themselves beneath a table; the cockatoo, foiled of its prey, skimmed, screeching, round the ceiling. It was Bernard who, with a well-directed sofa-cushion, drove the enemy from the room. There was only a chink of the door open, but the cockatoo turned on his side as he flew, and swung through it like a woodcock.

We slammed the door behind him, and at the same instant there came a thumping on the floor overhead, muffled, yet peremptory.

'That's Mrs. Buck!' said Miss Shute, crawling from under

the table; 'the room over this is the one that had the candle in it.'

We sat for a time in awful stillness, but nothing further happened, save a distant shriek overhead, that told the cockatoo had sought and found sanctuary in his owner's room. We had tea *sotto voce*, and then, one by one, despite the amazing discomfort of the drawing-room chairs, we dozed off to sleep.

It was at about five o'clock that I woke with a stiff neck and an uneasy remembrance that I had last seen Maria in the kitchen. The others, looking, each of them, about twenty years older than their age, slept in various attitudes of exhaustion. Bernard opened his eyes as I stole forth to look for Maria, but none of the ladies awoke. I went down the evil-smelling passage that led to the kitchen stairs, and there on a mat, regarding me with intelligent affection, was Maria; but what—oh what was the white thing that lay between her forepaws?

The situation was too serious to be coped with alone. I fled noiselessly back to the drawing-room and put my head in; Bernard's eyes—blessed be the light sleep of sailors!—opened again, and there was that in mine that summoned him forth. (Blessed also be the light step of sailors!)

We took the corpse from Maria, withholding perforce the language and the slaughtering that our hearts ached to bestow. For a minute or two our eyes communed.

'I'll get the kitchen shovel,' breathed Bernard; 'you open the hall door!'

A moment later we passed like spirits into the open air, and on into a little garden at the end of the house. Maria followed us, licking her lips. There were beds of nasturtiums, and of purple stocks, and of marigolds. We chose a bed of stocks, a plump bed, that looked like easy digging. The windows were all tightly shut and shuttered, and I took the cockatoo from under my coat and hid it, temporarily, behind a box border. Bernard had brought a shovel and a coal scoop. We dug like badgers. At eighteen inches we got down into shale and stones, and the coal scoop struck work.

'Never mind,' said Bernard; 'we'll plant the stocks on top of him.'

It was a lovely morning, with a new-born blue sky and a light northerly breeze. We looked across the wavelets of the little cove and saw, above the rocky point round which we had groped last night, a triangular white patch moving slowly along.

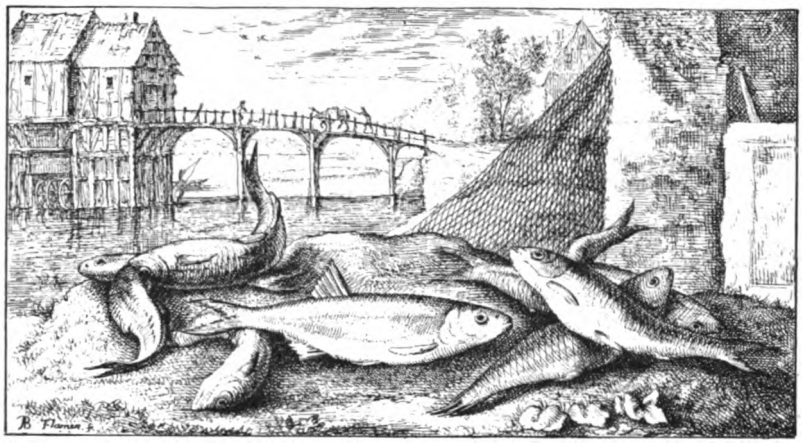
'The tide's lifted her!' said Bernard, standing stock-still. He

looked at Mrs. Buck's window and at me. 'Yeates!' he whispered, 'let's quit!'

It was now barely six o'clock, and not a soul was stirring. We woke the ladies and convinced them of the high importance of catching the tide. Bernard left a note on the hall table for Dr. Fahy, a beautiful note of leave-taking and gratitude, and apology for the broken window (for which he begged to enclose half a crown). No allusion was made to the other casualties. As we neared the boathouse he found an occasion to say to me:

'I put in a postscript that I thought it best to mention that I had seen the cockatoo in the garden, and hoped it would get back all right. That's quite true, you know! But look here, whatever you do, you must keep it all dark from the ladies——'

At this juncture Maria overtook us with the cockatoo in her mouth.



DRY-FLY FISHING FOR SEA TROUT

BY W. B. BOULTON

THE white trout, which provides so many of us with the first sensation of the rush of a migratory fish in the breezy surroundings which make the capture of his family so delightful, would seem to have received scant consideration at the hands of authors of angling literature. Whole libraries have grown around the history and the modes of taking his near relations. There is, perhaps, no branch of sport which has inspired more minute literary study than that of angling for the salmon and the chalk-stream trout. The details of tackle required for the successful pursuit of the former have been described with such scientific accuracy and lucid explanation by a hundred writers, that a man of ordinary intelligence can make himself master of the subject in a month, and start equipped with the experience, so far as material is concerned, of generations of practical fishermen. The mysteries of casting, and the general principles upon which flies for salmon are tied and chosen, are available in print in a measure almost sufficient to enable such a man to take a salmon, even though he had never seen a fly thrown in his life.

The trout of the southern streams has produced a literature beside which even that devoted to the salmon fades into insignificance. His breeding, his habits, his haunts, his food, the very weeds of his stream and the way they should be cut and

arranged for his comfort, are all subjects of serious treatises. Above all, since the vogue of the dry fly, the dressing of flies for his confounding has been raised to the dignity of a fine art, the principles and practice of which are displayed in a score of sumptuous volumes with a perfect wealth of pictorial, and, lately, of actual illustration. And yet if one turns to such a work as Mr. Pennell's volume on 'Salmon and Trout' in the Badminton series, which, for the ordinary fisherman at least, is a text-book, he finds *Salmo trutta* dismissed with a short page to the effect that the fish is practically a small salmon, and should be fished for in the same way, but with smaller flies and with lighter tackle. The consequence of this general neglect of the sea trout is that he is usually pursued, with more or less satisfactory results, with a clumsy imitation of the nondescript productions called flies which are used in salmon fishing, of a smaller size, indeed, but dressed upon no known principle, and varying quite arbitrarily with the district in which the trout is sought and the individual fancy of the tackle-maker.

In all this, as it appears to the present writer, there is a vast mistake. The habits of the white trout have not been sufficiently inquired into, or, at least, have received less attention than they deserve in the literature of the sport. The experience of the ordinary individual who goes after sea trout, in open waters at any rate, is apt to be disappointing. Even in preserved and famous waters his capture would seem to take the form of many unsatisfying lean days with a few fish, and more or less rare holocausts in which the boat bottom is paved with the bodies of the devoted *trutta*. Some recent experiences of the writer would suggest that he is altogether worthy of better things. It would seem that the sea trout holds a position midway between the salmon and the brown trout—that is of the civilised creature of the southern streams, and not the starved North-country specimen, who with luck adds an annual inch or so to his puny length in the stony surroundings in which Providence has placed him. The sea trout has all the vigour born of a trip to the sea, which converts a smolt of a few ounces into a grilse of as many pounds in a few weeks. So much he shares with his cousin the salmon, and, unlike the salmon, he declares his relationship with the brown trout by a free rising at such natural insect life as he may find within his reach when he returns to fresh water. In such conditions it seems to the writer that a radical alteration might take place in the methods of his pursuit; that in favourable surroundings he might be paid the compliment of being approached

like a more or less rational creature, and solicited with at least a modicum of the pains which are so cheerfully bestowed upon the ordinary self-respecting brown trout of the Test, Itchen, or Kennet.

To most fishermen who have followed the sea trout to his breeding-places in Scottish or Irish lake or river, the blank day consequent on the lack of water in the stream is a familiar experience. Who has not waited days and weeks in a Highland inn with the sun like a furnace, the lake a looking-glass, the stream a mere trickle, and the white trout leaping in a shoal in the bay at its mouth in the vain attempt to get rid of the sea-lice thick on their sides? The spate comes, and, if wind and other factors are propitious, the fisherman will have sport in the pools as the trout pass up to the lake, and a few days of exciting fun with the fresh-run fish in the lake itself. Great fun it is while it lasts, the vigour of the fish when hooked and the freedom of his rising making amends for weeks of disappointment.

But who does not know the other side of the picture, when the trout, though in the lake, will not move, when over-fishing keeps them down in days apparently perfect for their rising; the deadly dull drift with the wind, the reflection of the ripple all day in one's eyes, the eternal beating of the water, the unutterable boredom of lake fishing which saps the spirit of the fisherman and produces a late strike, and converts the infrequent rise into an almost inevitable miss?

It was in such circumstances that the enlarged capabilities of the sea trout as a sporting fish occurred to the writer. Two years ago he was on the West Coast of Scotland with a friend in a season when absence of rain had utterly prevented the running of the fish. The water consisted of a lake connected by a small stream of perhaps a mile in length with an arm of the sea, in which the tide rose and fell many feet. The stream, a mere brook at the best, had a bare inch of water on its shallows, and was quite impassable for the trout. These were congregated in a vast shoal off its mouth; the flowing tide brought them up within a few hundred yards of the trickle of fresh water; with the ebb they retreated down the shores of the narrow bay until they were well within the track of the red-funnelled steamers of the West Coast. But as each evening came round their antics were calculated to bring water to the mouth of the bored fishermen who were spending profitless days on the loch, with perhaps a couple of black, stale, small fish to each boat as the reward of a hard day's fishing. When the sun went down, whatever the state of the tide, the water and the air were both alive with

leaping fish. The splash of the descending patriarchs of four and five pounds weight broke the evening stillness with continuous detonations like pistol-shots, until well on into the night the shadows of the rocky shore were lit up by the reflected light from their silver bellies.

It was found possible to approach the shoal in a boat and to anchor on its edge so near to the leaping fish that the sea-lice could be seen on their sides, and the vibrations of the tail in the air, overrunning itself like the racing screw of a steamer, heard as a distinct whizz. Three and four fish were to be counted in the air at a time; it would have been perfectly feasible to make practice upon them with a pea-rifle, but to the fly they were utterly indifferent. The nearness of the boat made no difference to the fun so long as there was no stamping of feet or rattle of oars in rowlocks, but any jarring vibrations caused by clumsy handling of the boat was followed by a cessation of the rising in its vicinity; and the same result followed when the water within reach had been continuously flogged with the conventional outfit of the white-trout fisherman.

It was the obvious and inevitable effect of this display of coarse tackle and bad flies upon the rising of the fish which led to a discussion and a trial of other methods. The rain still held off, and the trout still displayed their agility in the bay. The fishing in the loch grew more hopeless each day, until an unusually propitious morning, with a light breeze and gauzy clouds veiling the sun at intervals, suggested a trial of the fish in the salt water. The fact that the trout had been seen leaping before breakfast was an additional inducement; the gillies were consulted, but shook their heads; the idea of fishing with the fly in salt water was considered hopeless as well as unorthodox, so the writer and his friend started alone. The tide was running out and the fish were much less active than in the evenings, but an occasional leap and frequent rises were quite sufficient to betray the whereabouts of the shoal and to enable the boat to be kept on its skirts. The water was of that brilliant clearness peculiar to a rocky coast, and, with the sun shining and in the occasional absence of wind, fishing was hopeless. But whenever a cloud extinguished the glare or the wind provided a ripple, the white trout rose freely at a brown trout-fly of moderate size. It was evident, indeed, that fineness of tackle was of the last importance. We were ill provided with ordinary trout tackle, but searching of fly-hooks produced a single-gut collar approximating in fineness to the southern standard, and a bare half-dozen of Red Tags

WITH THIS EQUIPMENT SPORT WAS CONTINUOUS

dressed small for grayling. With this equipment sport was continuous. By casting carefully, as one would for a brown trout, wherever a fish disclosed its presence by a leap or a boil on the surface of the water, a hearty rise was the result, and, although the clearness of the water and the brightness of the day produced much short rising, a good bag of fish, from three-quarters to two pounds and a half, was the result of the experiment. The smallness of the hook and the tenderness of the mouth of the fish were productive of many runs which ended in favour of the trout, the smallest concession in the matter of slack line ended the connexion between angler and angled, and such fish as were brought to the net, unless hooked in the bone of the jaw, demonstrated the eternal importance of the taut line by an oval-shaped hole in which the small hook held only by virtue of the tension. But the success of the brown-trout method of fishing for white trout in water so clear that the fish could be seen like violet shadows following the fly over the sandy bottom of twenty feet of water was the most instructive lesson of a good day's sport.

The writer and the same friend were able to pursue the inquiries suggested by this experiment on the West Coast of Ireland in the autumn following, and to apply some principles of the chalk-stream methods of fishing to a point which suggested the subject of this paper. The fishing here was an open one, and the hotel was full of fishermen. The water was extensive, including three white-trout lakes, one of large area, connected with the estuary by a small river of perhaps three miles in length. As is usual in such fisheries, the fishing was divided into 'stands' fished in rotation by the various parties at the inn, but the river itself was common property; it was on the direct route to the lakes, and, by the rule of the inn, was open to all fishermen going to or from the regular drifts of the lake fishing. The fishing had been fair earlier in the season, but the lakes had already declined, and disappointing days were the rule and not the exception. One pool, at least, in the river was full of large fish which leapt freely and attracted every fisherman in the inn, until every fly in the united collections of a score of eager anglers must have been seen by every fish a score of times. This devoted pool, as a consequence of its position on the line of march, received a hammering which must have been rare, even in the annals of open fishing. The trout entered freely into the spirit of the thing, rose freely round the flies, but never at them.

It was in this pool, the most hopeless spot for taking a sea trout with ordinary tackle, as the experience of every morning

and evening proved, that one sought to establish the character of that fish as the worthy relation of the *Salmo fario* of the south. A stand on the dull lake was sacrificed with the greatest cheerfulness, and, after the customary pounding of the procession of fishermen to the lakes had subsided, the writer and his friend smoked a pipe on the banks and waited for some sign on the part of the sulking fish.

An examination of the surrounding heather revealed the poverty of the entomological resources of the place and season. Indeed, there was no insect life at all except a good supply of grasshoppers and an occasional daddy-longlegs, always excepting the detestable tick which makes Connemara heather a place of dire punishment for sensitive skins. It was decided to take the grasshopper as a model for the choice of a fly, and, as a preliminary, a handful of the live insect was collected and thrown on the water. In a moment the surface of the pool was alive with rising fish, and scarce a single specimen of that devoted handful drifted down the pool with the west wind to the safety of the bank. So decided a movement on the part of the fish suggested an immediate start, and we set to work with fine tackle and trout-flies, March Brown and Grouse Hackle, casting up stream with care, standing well away from the bank, and fishing wet with the usual working of the fly down stream. No fish stirred, and it was soon evident that the constant fishing of the pool in the same way with coarse tackle and flies had revealed to the fish the artificial character of the process. It was as hopeless to catch a white trout here with a wet fly as it was to rise a two-pound fario in a chalk stream with a drag on your line.

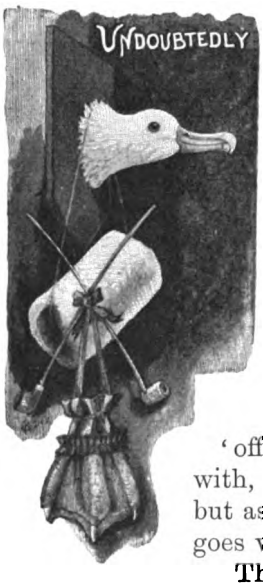
With the recollection of the success of the wet fly in salt water in the previous autumn this result was disappointing, and, as a last resource, the full-blown experience of a moderately intimate acquaintance with the methods of a chalk stream was brought into requisition. The grasshopper is a difficult insect to match in an ordinary collection of trout-flies, and a searching examination of boxes resulted in the selection of a floating Governor and a large Sedge as the likeliest imitations. A single fly was tied to a fine cast, thrown up and across stream, and allowed to float down with the gentle ripple of the wind. The utmost care was taken both in casting and in taking off, and the second cast was rewarded by the rising and killing of a fine fish of two and a quarter pounds. Frequent rises and the subsequent capture of other fish confirmed the susceptibility of the white trout to the attractions of a lure imitating in a rough and ready manner the food he was accus-

tomed to take, and presented to his notice in a natural and logical manner.

The writer is, of course, unaware whether this experience of his is singular, but he has never seen any account of such a method of taking white trout in print, neither has he had the opportunity of carrying the experiment further, either by fishing for the white trout in more promising surroundings, or by making a better examination of the insect food available in any particular place. This latter, of course, is a most important point, upon which the whole idea rests. The ephemeræ are rare in streams affected by sea trout, but heather, especially in the autumn, affords protection for varieties of moths which are doubtless often taken by the fish; and in the West of Ireland, at any rate, there are prodigious quantities of red ant which at certain times will rise white trout in shoals both in lake and river. The fact that such is the case would seem to suggest an alteration in the methods of fishing for white trout, which would add enormously to his value as a game fish. In the first place, tackle would perforce be lighter, and his already great reputation as a fighter would be increased when he had to be played with the fine gut and small hooks necessary to his rising, instead of being hauled forth with the stout salmon gut now so often used. Then he would be sought in much more agreeable circumstances, and the deadly uniformity of the lake drift would be exchanged for all the incident of stream fishing, where there is a continual interest excited in the mind of the fisherman by the shelter of every weed, the curl of every eddy, and the look of every pool which may prove to be the haunt of a fish. It would seem, too, that fish which had been utterly shied by the ordinary casting would still be available for those who chose to fish for him in a scientific manner. The lake might still remain for the floggers, and the numerous trout which always seem to remain in the streams would be available for the devotees of the dry fly without any conflict of interest between the two schools. Finally the sea trout would be thought worthy of pursuit by many fishermen from the south, who at present would as soon think of fishing for him from a boat in the prevailing manner as they would of fishing for eels in a canal.

THE BIRDS OF THE SOUTHERN SEAS

BY EDWARD ROPER, F.R.G.S.



UNDOUBTEDLY a voyage round those capes which stretch into the Southern Ocean would be much more tedious were it not for the number of birds which keep company with the vessels passing through their domain—especially in the case of sailing ships.

Not half enough has been told about the beauty of these glorious birds. Their wonderful and interesting habits have never received the notice they deserve.

Let us fancy ourselves on one of the few sailing ships which still make the voyage to Australia, outward bound, and 'off the Cape.' We have a strong wind astern, with, our landsmen think, a heavy sea running; but as we carry to'-gallant sails, we know that all goes well.

The sky is overspread with swiftly hurrying clouds, occasional bright gleaming sunrays burst through and light up gloriously the heaving billows below. Astern, magnificent following seas—mountains of water—heave up, come roaring towards us with such speed and power that it seems certain that one must overtake and overwhelm us. But they lift the great ship, pass under her; for a moment we look down into a valley, gloomy in indigo and purple; then, gazing upwards, we are awed by the next huge sea racing towards us, and often as these mighty mounds of brine rear higher than their fellows, their smooth crests unbroken,

the sun beams through with a flash, a gleam of emerald—radiant, resplendent, dazzling the beholders.

As we speed on our ship swings and rolls amid the turmoil, the strong wind roars through our rigging, making music to the captain, who hopes this may continue for many days. To many of our passengers it is an unpleasant time. These crouch under sheltering bulwarks, and, gazing on the unresting ocean with tired eyes, are weary of the monotony; they take no heed of anything but the unpleasantness of their environment, and regard such voyaging as sheer misery. But to those of us having eyes for beauty, it is different; the violent tumult of old ocean, the rapid movement of the clouds, the bursts of sunlight flashing on the breaking wave-crests, are a vision of unceasing, of surpassing interest, making the experience enjoyable, its memory a life-long pleasure. Then, besides all this, there are the marvellous albatrosses and the other winged companions of our voyage to keep us wondering and admiring.

When we passed Tristan d'Acunha they joined us, and now as we are running our Eastern course they crowd round us, and will stay with us, most of them, until we reach Australia.

In museums are stuffed specimens of these birds; generally they are offensive burlesques. Their pure white plumage is marred, and the grace of their contour is entirely lost. They have often been pictured, too, but in no case quite correctly, and justice has never been done to their grace and beauty.

One cannot understand why artists who voyage to Australia, and see these creatures, do not give us really good pictures of them. But so it is; therefore I, having made many such passages, observed and sketched and captured them, desire to give a fairer description than has yet, I think, been given, of the Birds of the Southern Seas.

First amongst them in size and beauty is the Albatross. Although there are several varieties, amongst sailors but one bird receives this name. Let us take 'a look astern,' as I call the drawing which illustrates this article. That immense white bird with dark wings about the centre of the picture is *the* albatross of seafarers—the Wandering Albatross of scientists (*Diomedéa exulans*); so is that further one showing its under side, with others in the distance. These are adult birds, frequently measuring much over ten feet from tip to tip of wings. 'Old salts' declare they are caught fourteen feet across. It may be so. I never met with one which had so wide a spread. One I caught, ten feet across, weighed exactly nineteen pounds.

Contrary to the statements of naturalists, I believe they do not vary in plumage when adult, but the young ones may. Just above the rail in the drawing there is a bird with light under side and chin, its back, neck, and upper sides being dark. It was brown really, and pale fawn colour in the lightest parts. Another, sailing downwards to the right, was the loveliest dove colour and white; both are young birds, the brown one we thought to be the younger.

Then there is the Mollyauk of seamen, the cautious albatross of naturalists (*Diomedéa chlorohynchus*), which is smaller, having a dark bar across its back There is one above the young albatross. Mollyauks have been taken with a wing-spread of six to seven feet. Their colour varies: some are brown, some grey and white; their beaks vary, too: many are black and others orange. There seems to be no rule for this, whilst with the wandering albatross the beak is always pale flesh colour, as are the feet, and the texture is so soft and delicate that the contact with the deck soon spoils their beauty. Mollyauks fly more rapidly than the larger species and with less solemnity and grandeur.

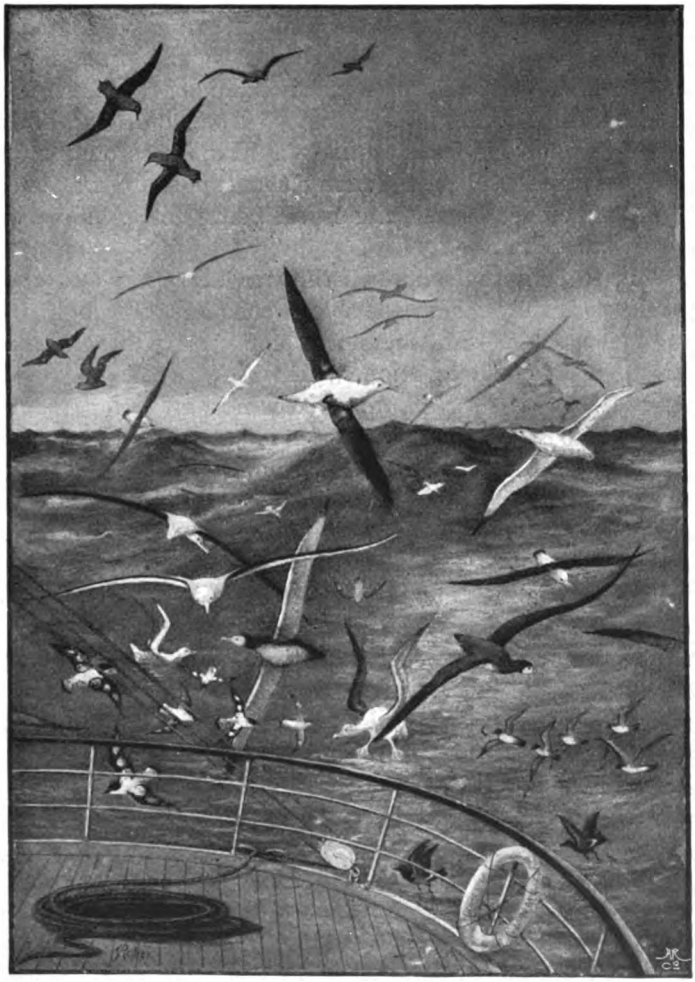
Other birds are shown in this drawing which are also albatrosses. Sailors will not agree with this statement. They call them Cape Parsons and by other nicknames. They are deep chocolate, almost black. This is the Sooty Albatross (*Diomedéa fuliginosa*). Their habits are unlike the two former; they usually fly high with beaks pointing downwards. Some are depicted at the top of this illustration. They are not so numerous, neither do they stand by the ship as their brethren do. They are about five feet across the wings.

Most probably there are other varieties of the albatross; if the form of the nostrils be any guide, there certainly are. One, seamen call a Nelly. This is black, with orange bill and feet; it glides about in a way quite different from its fellows, and is not plentiful. Still another is met with in those oceans. It has broader, shorter, dark wings and plumage. It is rare; the sailors call it the Cape Hen, but I believe it to be an albatross also. It is, however, the two first-mentioned which the voyager notices particularly, which, having joined our ship, will stay with us for weeks, or months, travelling many thousands of miles. This is proved by marked birds, which kept with us from Tristan d'Acunha to Australia.

With some of us the custom is to look over our birds every morning. We have so long an acquaintance with them that we

can recognise each easily; we have given them quaint names, and look on them as members of our community, as we do our cats and dogs.

These grand birds never appear to rest when there is any wind. A gale suits them; a dead calm does not. Sailors declare they



A LOOK ASTERN

sleep upon the wing. As long as one can see towards night they are around us, and we are never up early enough to miss them. In dry weather, with any breeze, they never flap a wing, but merely keep them extended, going where they please, at any rate where they choose, without visible effort. As we stand aft gazing at

them, they come so close we can see the expression of their eyes. Watch as we may we cannot perceive them make the slightest exertion, they float after us, around us, ahead of us in graceful curves, no matter at what rate we sail, without a feather moving.

Often they glide on before us, passing our fast sailing ship as swiftly as a swallow could; they sail away a mile or two ahead, sweep round in circles many a mile across, then with grace and beauty they come back and join the crowd astern. Now they make circuits round us, moving through the air ten miles for our one, anon returning and following as before. All this without one wing flap, without one feather stirring. This goes on for weeks, for miles on miles, till surely many thousands are traversed by these glorious creatures, a wing never being folded, nor a single moment's rest taken.

This is to be witnessed when the weather is dry and there is any wind; then they seem to be able to continue their flight indefinitely; but should it rain, they flap their wings like other birds. That is to obtain an elevation, which secured, they slide down at their desired angle with unmoved wings, sweeping along the surface of the ocean until the impetus is exhausted, when, powerfully waving their long pinions, they mount again, repeating the proceeding. All this causes never-ending interest and wonder, for during it our ship may herself be sailing twelve knots an hour and more.

When it is calm—and it is sometimes in summer, off both Capes—they use their wings to help their flight; then, too, they will alight and swim in flocks about the ship like geese, devouring ravenously what is thrown to them. It is then one perceives the difficulty they have to rise from the water; often we observe them fail to ascend until some heaving wave lifts them high enough to enable them to launch into their favourite element.

It is only when flying, however, that an albatross is beautiful. We see them usually stuffed, standing, with folded wings; then they look about as handsome as a goose. The moment that this bird prepares to alight he becomes grotesque. With his great pink feet spread out dangling beneath him, his strangely jointed wings brandished, he flounders in the air with many gyrations, seemingly as awkward and ungainly then as he is grand and dexterous when he floats on outstretched pinions around us. And his voice, seldom heard, is not musical. A donkey's bray is most like it; but when a dozen gather about some floating garbage, the rumpus which they raise as they snap and snarl about it is ludicrous.

The sooty albatross and the Cape hen always flap their wings; they are both, especially the latter, slow-flying birds, which doubtless accounts for their so seldom accompanying vessels.

But there is one bird, quite common in these seas, which shares with the albatross everyone's admiration. I refer to the Cape pigeon (*Procellaria capensis*). Nothing that flies is more fascinating than these little creatures, which flutter about our ship like immense butterflies. Several are shown in the lower corner of the picture. They are conspicuously marked in black and white; they come so near that we can note their wondering eyes; and the grace with which they hover round is most enchanting. One can hardly realise that they are not pigeons, being about their size and build; but they are petrels, having nostrils like double-barrelled pistols perched upon their bills. Their voice is pleasant; it is like a swallow's twitter. They are numerous: we are seldom without their company.

There are Cape doves, too; one flies in advance of the Cape pigeons. They are met off both the Capes. In size, habits, and action they are similar to Cape pigeons, but not so conspicuous; they are dove-coloured, and are petrels also.

Whale birds are often seen. I find no notice of them in books; they are smaller than any I have mentioned: they may be about fifteen inches across the wings. They fly swiftly in flocks, and keep close to the surface of the water; they never come near our ship, but may be noticed shooting rapidly between the seas; they are never observed to alight. These, too, are petrels, in colour dark grey and white.

The last bird I must mention; although the smallest which one meets in those distant regions, it is by no means the least interesting. It is the stormy petrel—the Mother Carey's chicken. I believe those in these southern seas are almost identical with what are found in all oceans. In colour they are chocolate and black with a patch of brilliant white upon their backs; they are the size of an English thrush, with a wider stretch of wing. They have been so often and so correctly figured and described that I will not do more than remark that their movements amid the heaviest seas, the ease with which they skim the foam and smother of the roughest waves, are very charming to observe. No wind, no commotion of the turbulent ocean incommodes them. They fly head to wind, with it, or across it, with equal ease, keeping always so close to the surface of the water that they can pat it with one foot—a habit peculiar to these lovely little companions of our voyage. What wonderful powers

these tiny creatures possess! When handled they seem almost as fragile as moths; we are astounded at their doings. It is a crime to catch such tender little birds. It is rarely done intentionally, and they usually die when touched by a human hand.

Now having done some slight justice to the beings who pass the greater portion of their lives on untiring pinions in these vast oceans, far from land or any resting place, we have to admit—we do it with reluctance—that, much as they amuse us, greatly as they relieve the monotony of our journey, they do it for what they get from us, following our ship for what is flung from her.

They know meal times as well as we do; they gather around our stern when the bells ring, and there they hover in impatient crowds until the stewards throw overboard the débris from our plates and dishes; then alighting, they fight and squabble for the captivating morsels. Cape pigeons are famous foragers, so are the doves; mollyauks are most voracious. Frequently they dive for sinking pieces, and we see them swimming like fish in the high transparent waves; and there is great commotion and much noise in our wake—the braying of the huge albatrosses, the screaming of the petrels, the chatter of the mollyauks, with rattling of hard beaks, making a noise like bones or castanets, with flashing wings and general excitement amongst the feathered crowd, it is as fine a spectacle, nay, much finer, than feeding time at the Zoo.

The wandering albatrosses often appear to scorn this rough and terrible scramble; it is only pretence—they do not come off badly, for if the lesser birds are fighting over a larger piece than usual, one of the huge fellows is bound to drive along at express speed, snatch it from amongst them, and sheer off, gorging it as he flies.

There are circumstances in which these great creatures are exceedingly dangerous. Their powerful hooked beaks are fearful weapons, so are their wings. I once witnessed a terrible spectacle; a little midshipman fell overboard during so heavy a gale that it was impossible even to attempt to rescue him. We saw the albatrosses gather round him, we saw them buffet him with their enormous wings, tear at him with their cruel beaks; so before the poor boy was hidden from us in the murk astern, we knew that the life was beaten out of him and that he would be devoured by those savages, and for many days thereafter we could only look at these dreadful birds with horror unspeakable.

But no such accident happened on this voyage. For many days the fine fair wind I have spoken of continued, and always we watched with deepening interest the winged creatures which

ceaselessly glided about us. Our ladies, hearing that the breasts of albatrosses make elegant cuffs and collars, took their choice of them. Some wished for pure white ones, some for fawn, others were sweet on dove colour and grey; I really think they came at last to regard them merely as flying muffs, which was rather a comedown from their previous ecstasies about their beauty, grandeur, and that sort of thing.

But there was small chance of catching any whilst our ship made such headway, although we men were pledged to hook the bird so longed for by our special friend amongst the fair girl passengers should a favourable time occur, and for long it seemed that we should have no such chance.

Angling for Cape birds is a favourite amusement in these seas, but unless one knows how, there is no result. For the small ones, Cape pigeons and doves, we trail a few hundred yards of twine astern; a cork is fastened to the end. As the ship falls and rises this line is jerked about in all directions. The birds, crowding about, fly against it, become entangled, and are drawn on board. We caught many thus, so the ladies were well supplied with skins of Cape pigeons for caps, and wings to decorate them. The large birds frequently flew against our lines too; they took no heed, kept on their course, and snapped them; thus many lines were lost—twine and crochet cotton soon became scarce. To catch an albatross is quite another matter. However, one day there was great excitement amongst the younger people in our cuddy; the wind had fallen to a gentle breeze, the ship was making very little headway, it was a good time to try to catch one. Our ladies were enthusiastic; they were wild to witness the capture of the muffs which they had chosen.

It was done with hook and line, but not quite as fish are caught. Some of us, having been through this region before, knew how to proceed. We took a strong fishing line, at least a hundred fathoms of it; to this we fastened a sailmaker's hook, which has no barb. We baited it with pork-rind; six inches from this we attached a cork float—a flat piece about a foot square—and the line was coiled on deck in a way that would allow of its running out freely.

When a bird passed near, the bait was tossed over; if the albatross made a swoop towards it, we paid out line; if the bird passed on unheeding, we hauled in and waited for another opportunity. Many times we did this. Often a big bird alighted beside the float, picked up the bait, and we were elated; but these were only trifling. When the line ran out, and the ship began to tow the

float, they sheered off alarmed—nothing would induce them to touch it whilst moving.

At length, after numerous fruitless throws, a bird dropped down, pounced on the bait, and tried to swallow it; we pulled the line, his majesty was fast, and we were jubilant. But this, the first bird hooked that day, rose in the air—an unusual occurrence. We pulled and hauled as if it were a kite, whilst he soared and swooped, doing all he could to escape; this he did, too, for, making a dash towards us, he slacked the line, the hook dropped from his bill and he was free. Then arose Ah's! and Oh's! from the spectators—some saying this, some advising that, and all were disappointed. We were not disheartened, however; we tried again and again, and at length one huge old bird kindly took the hook up correctly, and remained upon the sea. Then came the tug of war! Spreading his broad feet against the water, expanding his wide wings and beating the air with them, he exerted all his enormous power against us. One or two pulling could not gain an inch, but help was plentiful, so foot by foot we dragged him in until he was beneath the quarter and the critical moment had arrived, for now he must be lifted bodily. Would the line part? would the hook hold? An ordinary fish-hook would hardly have done so, but this one did, and all went well until the creature was about close enough to handle; then the chief mate appeared, and he was angry. Why?

Chief mates do not approve of bird catching, for the moment one is brought on board it ejects from its mouth a quantity of evil-smelling oil, on which, it is said, they feed their young ones. But the deck being the chief mate's pride, he keeps it milk-white with holy-stones and sand—and oil would spoil its purity, so no wonder, therefore, that he abhors our proceedings. Yet as he notices that one of us clasps the bird's beak as it hangs outside the rail, and passes some turns of strong twine around it and so prevents it doing damage, he goes away contented.

Then we lift in our prize and realise what it is we handle. Most of those present, and few are absent now, wisely sheer off, for the sweep of our captive's wings looks, and is, dangerous. Then he who holds its head stabs it at the base of the skull with a sharp awl, and there is instant quietness and painless death.

After the first capture we had astonishing success that day; we got nine magnificent birds, white-breasted, brown and grey. They were ranged upon a hen-coop, making a show like a poulterer's shop at Michaelmas.

It was amusing to watch the other albatrosses when one of them was hooked. Thinking their chum had got a prize, they bore

down eagerly, endeavouring to get it from him. We noticed their absurd expressions of surprise and anger as they saw their friend dragged from amongst them, and realised that, instead of having secured a good thing, he was in dire distress; then they hurried away, disgusted—it was most comical.

That afternoon it was dead calm and the glass fell rapidly; our captain prognosticated wind, which we soon had—a heavy gale, lasting several days. Then when our ship was working heavily under close-reefed topsails, making bad weather of it, frightening

HOOKED

many, some wise ones declared that it was owing to the albatrosses we had slain; some sailors—always superstitious—made this assertion. We had of course the 'Ancient Mariner' quoted, and great horrors were foretold. In vain we argued against this nonsense, the croakers would not listen or agree, but went on predicting all kinds of horrors, which mercifully did not befal us.

Then when calmer seas and quiet weather returned to us, these fearful souls, being all right again, were as keen as any to catch some more, or at least to have their rightful share of what were already killed.

I have noticed that, usually, soon after capturing a number of these birds as I have described, it does blow hard, and there is a spell of nasty weather. The explanation, I think, is that the state of the atmosphere conveys to them the feeling that a bad time is coming for gathering food, their appetites are quickened, and striving to get all they can before bad weather comes, they take baits greedily, which in ordinary weather they refuse.

We had difficulty to keep the peace amongst a dozen ladies, each desiring to have a muff, a mat, two pipe stems, and a pair of feet—whilst only nine birds had been taken. Besides, the lucky 'catchers' were quite ignored, badly as they wanted some portions too. The ladies who had husbands appealed to them, and they, taking up the cudgels, made matters worse! Having chosen birds when alive and sweeping round us, they claimed them with vehemence when they lay dead upon the deck. For a little while it looked as if an unpleasant time was in store, for it takes a small matter to raise great trouble amongst idle folk at sea. At length it was decided that the ship's butcher should skin the birds, take out their wing-bones, prepare the feet, and preserve all properly; he was then to make up as many parcels of these things as there were passengers who wanted them, and we were to draw lots for them. This being carried out, the controversy was settled without bloodshed.

It is true that the breasts of these fine birds make handsome muffs. The wing-bones are valuable pipe stems. I have had one seventeen inches long. The skin of their immense feet makes curious tobacco pouches, or workbags for ladies. Their heads stuffed and mounted are fine wall decorations. Their flesh is eatable, but I have tasted nicer food.

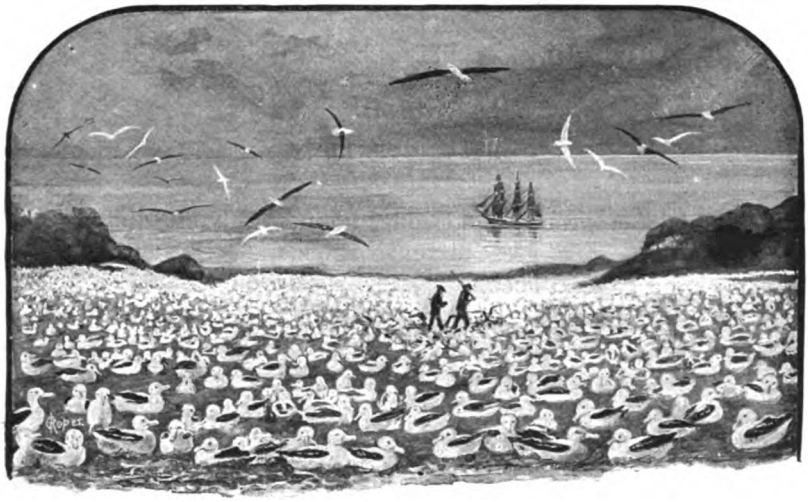
Albatrosses are never entirely absent from the southern seas. During the breeding season fewer adult birds are met with, but the younger ones take their places in equal numbers, and are as powerful, as graceful, and as skilful, seemingly, as their parents.

Their breeding places, on the uninhabited islands scattered widely about the lonely southern oceans, have often been described. I subjoin a sketch made from a photograph by one of the, surely, very few travellers who have landed with a camera on one of these places. From the ship, the multitude of birds on the hills and crags gave the impression of their being vast tablecloths, or snowfields, spread upon the heights. On landing, thousands of penguins, scuttling like rabbits to their burrows, first attracted notice. Beaten tracks led to the higher ranges where the albatrosses were congregated.

Naturally expecting that the incursion of human beings

amongst them would cause alarm, the rush of countless wings and deafening noise, they were surprised to find that their advent was almost unnoticed and that a strange weird quietness prevailed.

The birds were so tame, so reluctant to stir, and sat so closely together, that it was not possible to walk amongst them without harming them, and it was difficult to move the great fowls out of the way. When pushed, or kicked aside, they merely rattled their beaks, or made a hissing noise, and rarely they disgorged some of the red, rancid oil, I have already mentioned; but they uttered no cry, nor any sound, and when the intruders stepped clear of them, they at once resumed their old positions with seeming satisfaction.

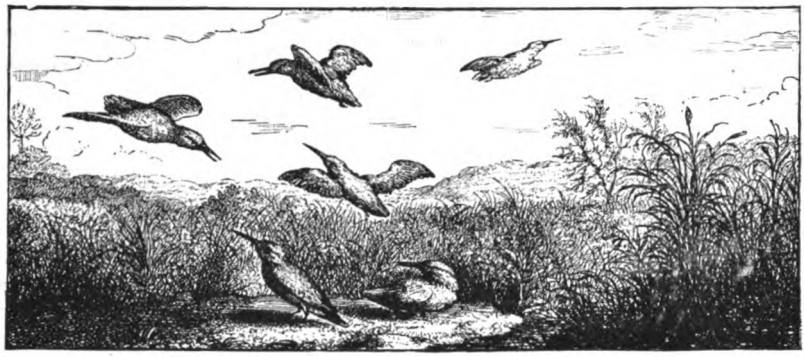


A BREEDING PLACE

This was in July; they were not nesting, probably they were preparing to mate. Many square miles were covered with them, every spot level enough held an albatross. A very few were on the wing, fewer were trudging up or down the paths leading to the shore; but there was no excitement—it was dead silence in those high and eerie regions.

Those handled were very fat; they were certainly well prepared to do with little food for a long period.

The albatross lays but one egg and drags a little soil around it. The mollyauk makes a nest, using the loose earth for it, although it is raised but a few inches above the surface. But it is only when far from land, away on those vast and lonely oceans, that one can really appreciate the beauty and the glory of these birds of the southern seas.



THE COST OF A GROUSE MOOR

BY LEO PARSEY

THE cost of a grouse moor depends not only on the probable bag, but also to a great extent on the house accommodation, locality, and general accessibility by road or rail. Of late years rentals have increased by leaps and bounds, more moors are in the market, lodges have been enlarged and rendered more convenient for the reception of visitors, and many agents now devote special attention to the letting of grouse moors. A well-situated, compact moor that in an average season will yield from one to two brace of grouse per acre entails less expense on the lessee than a shoot of larger area producing only the same bag.

Owing to frequent complaints of misrepresentation by the owners and agents of shootings, it is advisable for a novice before definitely signing the agreement to obtain the assistance of an expert or make a practical inspection of the moor. The records of previous years require to be verified, although the bags made by other tenants are by no means an infallible guide as to the resources of a moor. An outbreak of disease, an inefficient keeper, careless drivers, or an unusually dry season may be the cause of small bags, and give an erroneous impression as to the actual capabilities of the ground.

Agents have a pecuniary interest in letting a moor, and with in the majority of cases no personal knowledge of the shoot, they can only form an opinion from the tabulated records of previous years. A personal visit, or an inspection by a practical man,

together with the verified particulars of bags made during the previous five years and a few quiet inquiries in the immediate neighbourhood, will often prevent disappointment.

The actual rental may vary from fifteen to twenty shillings per brace, or even more, for a moor with ample and convenient house accommodation, to seven shillings and sixpence or ten shillings a brace for a moor difficult of access, and without a lodge on the ground.

In some parts of Yorkshire a driving moor, good for an average bag of five hundred brace, may at times be rented for about 250*l.* per annum, this sum including the wages of a keeper on the ground, and a few hundred acres of low-ground shooting in addition.

Where the tenancy begins in February, the first item of expense is in heather burning, which should be commenced as soon as the heather is dry enough to burn ; and here it may be stated that it is advisable to have a clear understanding, or, better still, to have a definite agreement in the lease, as to the quantity to be burnt annually. In the best interests of the moor at least one twenty-fifth part should be burnt each season, in order to provide a supply of young heather for the birds. The ground should be burnt in narrow strips instead of in patches, and, if this is done, the services of six or eight men, in addition to the keeper, will be required for a few days. They should be well able to burn about twenty acres a day at a cost of three shillings and sixpence each man for wages. Throughout the summer the keeper will be busily employed in repairing the batteries, fitting up shelves for cartridges, putting up new seats, draining, and damming up any small watercourses so as to afford a water supply in the event of the season being exceptionally dry.

In Yorkshire, shooting over dogs is now a thing of the past, and on the great majority of the moors driving begins on the opening day, greatly to the advantage of the bag. Consequently the keeper's time is not occupied in dog-breaking, which frequently results in constantly disturbing the moors.

In the few places where point shooting is still indulged in, it is found that the bag contains a great proportion of small, immature birds and very few old cocks, whereas in driving the old birds come first to the guns, and the moor is greatly benefited by their removal. Late-hatched broods are walked over, and even if flushed frequently do not reach the guns, especially where only a few men are employed as drivers. On an average moor a large number of men are not required, and ten

or twelve good and experienced drivers are ample where only one set are employed.

Frequently, from a mistaken view of economy, boys are employed to act as beaters instead of men, as they can be obtained at a less wage; but this is a most short-sighted policy, as on the intelligent co-operation of the drivers the whole of the sport depends, and many a drive is spoilt through lack of interest or knowledge of what is required. Then, too, boys tire sooner than men, and are unable to tramp all day over the moors at the same pace, with the result that in order to give them a rest they are put in the most responsible positions as 'props' or 'flankers,' when a wave of the flag at the wrong moment may completely spoil the drive, and turn back the greater part of the birds on the beat.

Under all circumstances the very best and most intelligent of the drivers should act as 'props,' even if they receive a higher rate of pay for doing so. The usual rate of pay for drivers is three shillings and sixpence or four shillings a day, with lunch and beer, or five shillings a day when no lunch is provided; beer, however, being included. In most cases it will be found more satisfactory to let the men provide their own lunch, otherwise grumbling is almost sure to occur. The men employed are usually small farmers and their sons, and the shepherds engaged on the moor, as these men are not very busy at this season of the year, and are glad to earn a few shillings. Flags are provided, and are best made of glazed calico in red and white, as the sunlight flashing on the surface is conspicuous at a considerable distance.

On a compact moor six guns are generally sufficient, but this is a question for the host, provided there are a sufficient number of good butts. Usually lots are drawn for places, so as to ensure that each gun gets a good stand at least once or twice during the day. On a small moor the ground is driven twice, the interval at luncheon allowing time for the birds to work back to their old quarters. Lunch is a matter for the host to settle, but the practice of heavy luncheons is dying out. The actual cost of each day will probably average 5*l.* for wages, luncheon, and conveyance to and from the moor when hiring is resorted to. A five-hundred-brace moor would stand shooting once a week for the first month, and then once a fortnight for the remainder of the season; the bags at first being from one hundred to sixty brace, and after September probably dropping to forty or fifty brace a day. In the event of fog or storm preventing shooting,

the beaters receive half-pay, and it is far better in doubtful weather to abstain from disturbing the ground. Where amicable relations exist between the various shepherds and the keeper, the former will disturb the moor as little as possible; but should ill-feeling exist, the shooting will suffer, as then they will take the opportunity of 'shepherding' early on the morning of a shoot, disturbing the whole of the moor to the detriment of the bag.

Another item of expense should occur in the purchase of food for use in severe winters, although few keepers seem to think this matter worthy of attention. In very severe winters all the grouse will desert the moors and come down to the low country in thousands to feed in the fields and hedgerows. So long as the surface of the snow is not hard frozen they manage to exist even during severe and long-continued storms, but after a partial thaw followed by severe frosts they are compelled to seek food in other directions.

When the snow lies deep on the moors, it is impossible to clear a sufficient space of heather to afford feeding-ground, and in many cases it is a difficult matter for a man to reach the higher moors. The question arises as to whether, in view of a severe winter, it would not be advisable to cart up to some convenient spot near the centre of the shoot a few loads of barley or oats in the straw, which could be formed into a stack and thatched with heather ready for use in rough weather. In a late spring followed by sharp frosts the natural food supply is injuriously affected, and in a case of this kind artificial feeding would prove beneficial.

Although slightly adding to the expense, it is advisable to allow the keeper a game licence, as where a moor is taken on lease it will be of advantage to allow him to kill off as many of the old cocks at the end of the season as possible; and by stalking, becking, and potting them on the walls on frosty mornings, numbers may be killed, with the result that in the following season the young broods will consist of from eight to ten instead of from five to seven, as is frequently the case where too many old birds are allowed to exist.

During the spring and summer constant war should be waged against all vermin, and if the moor is an outside one it will probably suffer from the depredations of rooks and jackdaws, which should be shot on every available opportunity.

Shepherds need conciliating, and if there are any rabbits on the shoot the keeper should be allowed to give a couple away occasionally to these men, and also to the farmers who have grazing rights on the moor.

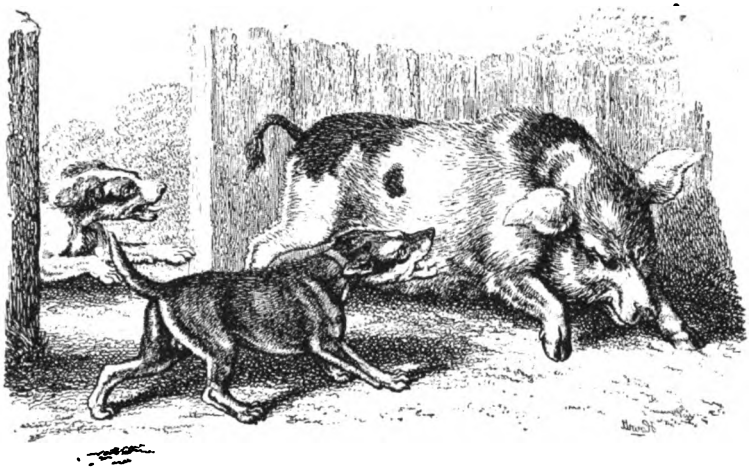
There are other exceptional expenses that may occur—as, for instance, when netting is started on the adjoining ground, a contingency by no means unlikely where there are small holdings close to a well-stocked moor. Should this occur, there is no effectual remedy except to net in self-defence, which may entail the purchase of hundreds of yards of netting in addition to contingent expenses.

Wire fences also prove very destructive to grouse, and where these are in existence it is advisable to put up a thin top rail, which is not an expensive item.

A typical five-hundred-brace driving moor in Yorkshire, without house accommodation, was for seven years leased by a friend of the writer at 250*l.* per annum, to include the wages of a keeper and the sporting rights over a few hundred acres of rough shooting adjoining the moor, consisting chiefly of rough pasture with a few acres of cultivated land and a large straggling wood.

The yearly expenditure did not exceed 310*l.*, inclusive of all cost except purely personal items; the total bag for the seven years was 3,410 brace of grouse, 86 pheasants, 263 brace of partridges, twelve couple of snipe, ten couple of woodcock, three blackcock, a few hares, and over 1,000 rabbits.

Generally speaking, with good management, the cost of an English driving moor should not exceed ten or fifteen shillings a brace where there is no lodge on the shoot; and on a Scotch moor, where the majority of the birds are killed over dogs, the expenses would be slightly less in average seasons.



'ANOTHER WAY'

BY OWEN RHOSCOMYL

SITTING at a round table in a snug corner of a favourite restaurant, I found a certain cousin of my own, whom I had not seen since that day in the long ago when he threw down his school books in disgust and forthwith 'ran away.' 'What's the good o' me learning French and German, and all this other Latin and stuff when I'm going to be a pirate?' said he to me, as he borrowed the threepence-halfpenny which was all that I possessed. As a matter of fact, that threepence-halfpenny was obtained upon false pretences, for the borrower of it never did become a pirate. By the time he got his sea-legs, he found that pirates were decidedly 'off,' and so he compromised by deciding to go out West and 'kill Injuns,' as the next best thing. Being that sort of boy to whom obstacles are like the paper hoops in a circus—things to be gone through head-first—he presently turned up smiling on the prairies and, not knowing one end of a saddle from the other, promptly found himself describing the airiest of movements on top of a particularly vicious broncho. With that contrariness which was the main feature of his nature, however, he was still in the neighbourhood of the saddle when the bucking ceased, and from that day forward 'he never looked back.'

Since then he had occasionally remembered me through the post, and now he had come home for a look round before trying

South Africa. Thus it came about that I was able to arrange this meeting.

When the first rush of conversation slacked away, we drifted from topic to topic till the subject of big game cropped up. 'But it must have been costly out there to get an outfit together for going hunting,' said I. 'I've seen the outfits that fellows take from town here. They are—well——'

He looked very straight at me, and a gleam of deep amusement came into his eyes. 'Yes, that's one way; but not the only way. And if I was to tell you of the way I got one outfit together—well, you'd think I was about the biggest liar that ever you heard. And I admit that to you the affair would seem too queer for swallowing; but any man who has lived long out West would see nothing out of the way about it. It would be merely an ordinary experience, but with a very good joke in it.'

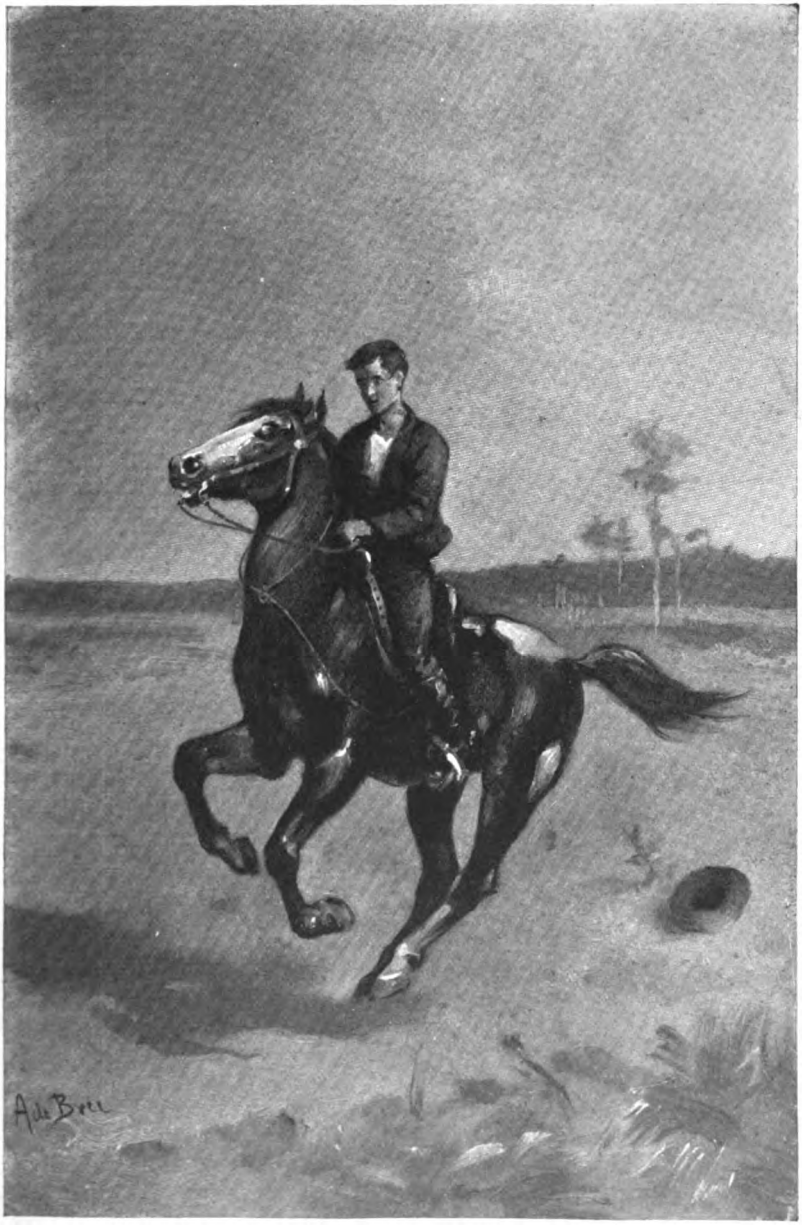
And with that he took another drink, and 'lit in' to the following story, detailing 'another way':—

There were three of us, and we'd just come off the trail; that is, we had just finished helping to drive some three thousand head of cattle from the upper country down to a new range. It had been a four months' job, with a fool of a foreman and a double fool of a cook. Therefore that trail ended in a sudden shooting affair across the camp fire, on the last night, and so we three found ourselves alone in the brush next morning, wondering what we should do to put us over the coming winter.

Arkansaw was the eldest; somewhere about five and twenty, a pretty, pink and white sort of a fellow, who had deserted store-keeping in Little Rock for the dubious delights of a cowboy's life. The trail just ended was his first experience of those delights, and his time for a month past had been fully occupied in fervently swearing that it should be the last.

Buckskin was just a bit younger, and was frontier-born. Still, that trail was his first also. I was the youngest, but held informal command, partly by virtue of some years of cowboy life, and partly because of things that had lately happened. Thus it was I who proposed that we should get an outfit together, and put in the winter by hunting and trapping, helped out by poisoning wolves. Wolf-skins paid well just then, besides the bounty on each.

But, 'Outfit!' quoth Arkansaw in disgust. 'We look like an outfit, we do. Where on airth are we a-going to get a team and waggon from? The hul derned three of us hain't got a dollar to



ON TOP OF A PARTICULARLY VICIOUS BRONCHO

straddle the ante with, not if we knowed there was four aces comin'.'

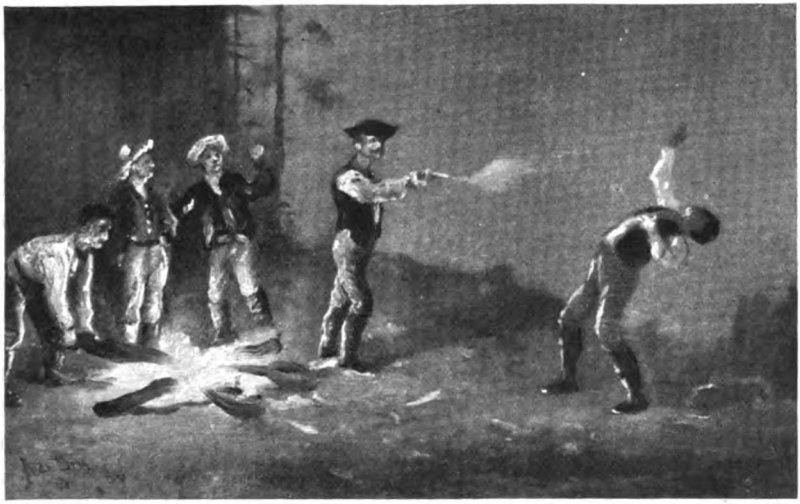
Buckskin looked at me and grinned, but I knew from the start that a hunting trip was exactly the notion for him.

Said I to Arkansaw, 'I suppose you'll come along all right if we do get an outfit together?'

He nodded.

'Then you just hear me,' I went on. 'Now down below on this river there's a whole countryful of Indians. Up above, on the other side of the divide, they are even more——'

'Then it looks as if there'd be some hunting done without waiting for the winter,' struck in Ark. 'Gosh dern it! hadn't



THAT TRAIL ENDED IN A SUDDEN SHOOTING AFFAIR

we better make tracks while we've got our hair on—what do you say, Buck?' and he tugged his hat down as if his scalp were already rising.

But Buckskin grinned again. 'Say, you've got some terbacker left; give us a chaw,' answered he.

I resumed. 'You see you're only a tenderfoot yet, Ark. That crowd over the divide is one nation, and these below us here are two tribes of another nation. Now these two tribes are fighters from away back, and would clear out the others if it were not for the fort and the soldiers. Well, if we just go over the divide and bring a bunch of that nation's horses this way, why those Indians won't follow us farther than this, for

fear of running against the two tribes below. Then we'll swop the horses for a waggon and team and what else we want, and so we'll have more traps and things than Carter had oats.'

'You don't suppose we'll hev to git up *extra* early in the mornin' for this sort of a layout,' replied Ark sarcastically.

But I was enjoying it as much as Buckskin, and kept a smooth face as I went on: 'Quite early. So early, I reckon, that we're not going to sleep at all.'

Here a light seemed to break in on him. 'Gosh dern it! Is this in earnest? on the square?'

'Dead level!' said I.

'But we hain't got no weepons,' protested he.

'Why, what's come to that pretty little shooting-iron of yours?' referring to a waistcoat-pocket sort of revolver which had been the peg for endless jokes in the past.

'Oh, let up on that; let's have some dead serious talk for once. This thing of mine ain't a thing to go on the warpath with, an' Buckskin with nothin' but an old shotgun he swopped for at the crossin'. Even you yourself hain't got a full round of cartridges for your six-shooter. Us on the warpath! I tell you we ain't built that way, not this time. I pass.'

'No, you don't,' said I. 'You're taking a hand, and you're going on with the game. It's not guns that will help us this time round, though if we did have each a good Winchester apiece, I allow that we could keep to the high ground and stand off the whole nation if it came to the push—but it's horses and keeping our eyes peeled that will take the trick. We're going to just drift along easy-like, and there's to be no trouble,' ended I, settling the matter with the word.

Our commissariat consisted of three 'biscuits' of camp bread, no salt, and two matches. We had had nothing to eat since the night before, but I calculated that if all went well we should get food within forty hours more, and meantime we should strike water often enough to keep us from suffering from thirst. Tightening the cinches (girths) then, we presently jogged away at an easy pace, and sundown saw us safely concealed in a patch of plum and cherry brush, at a point whence the eye commanded a full sweep of the river across our front, along which the Indian camps were scattered. It was the custom of that nation to let their horses feed well out on the upper benches during the day, and then at sundown to drive them in to the villages. The warhorses would then be picketed, each by one forefoot, close to the lodges; after which, as soon as darkness

fell, the rest were pushed back again over the bluff for the night, with one or more braves to watch them for three or four hours, or even all night if any danger were suspected.

We had accordingly calculated on dropping down upon one of these bunches as soon as the stars should indicate about an hour after midnight, which would leave us time to get well away before dawn. But this evening something was amiss. Instead of herds of ponies trooping down, we saw scanty clusters of them huddled amongst the teepees.

'What in —— is the matter now?' exclaimed Buckskin. 'If you'll listen to me, I guess we're just about one camp too late. I reckon some outfit's been before us and raided 'em a'ready.'

SAFELY CONCEALED IN A PATCH OF PLUM AND CHERRY BUSH

'It's "bad medicine" for us anyhow,' said I, 'and I reckon we'll just have to hang and rattle till we see what the next move is.'

But though we waited till the last gleam of day we saw no movement among the horses, and were forced to decide on some new deal. To those accustomed to night-guard, darkness is seldom altogether complete. Personally I can recall but few nights which would justify the phrase 'so black you couldn't see the colour of the white horse between your knees.' There is always the difference in shade between the earth and sky; between the level prairie and the lift of a bluff; between the lines of buffalo tracks and the sparse grass; and any animal

moving between you and the night's near horizon shows to a quick eye as a darker blur. Therefore I proposed that we should work down towards the river, and see if we could drop across any horses drifting out.

Naturally we moved slowly, so that it was full midnight before we felt satisfied that the herds were not coming out.

'Well,' said I at last; 'until we know what has happened there is only one thing we can do, and that is go into camp somewhere here in the brush on the river. I'll stand guard the first relief, though there's not much danger. They'll hardly care to pot us on spec, and us so near the fort. We might just as well unsaddle then, and you fellows can use the saddle-blankets to sleep in.'

'Oh sugar!' ejaculated Arkansaw presently, as he snuggled down with Buckskin under cover. 'These blankets do whisper' —and in truth they were still wet with the sweat of the horses.

'It's better than having only a Tuscon blanket, anyway,' returned I.

'Tuscon blanket! what's that?' replied Ark.

'To lie on your stomach and cover it with your back,' said I, while Buckskin had a hard struggle to stifle the short whoop which, amongst cowboys, does duty for a laugh.

My two hours were nearly over, and I was just thinking of routing out Buckskin to relieve me, when suddenly pandemonium broke loose somewhere down the river. The other two woke at once.

'Who's that a-prizing up h—ll like that at this time o' morning?' began Arkansaw, sticking his snub nose out over the edge of the blanket.

But Buckskin had him down and was lying full weight across upon his head to ensure the silence of the incautious tongue.

Me! I stretched out flat as a buffalo robe, and waited. The noise was coming up the river; an uproar of yelling, whooping, and shooting, borne on the thunder of hoofs. Nearer and nearer drew the din, and then with a rush it came abreast of us, but on the other side of the stream. There was no mistaking it—it was Indians on the loose, magnifying some triumph. As they passed by some of the bullets yipped through the brush about us or thwitted into the cottonwoods, and I caught a stifled 'B'gosh' from under Buck's body.

But none of us were hit, and presently, as the clamour died out up the river, I turned in, leaving Buckskin to his turn of guard.

At break of day we roused out. 'Come!' said I; 'we may

as well eat what we've got, and then we can go on down to the Agency and buy more. We'll have to get track of things, and find out how the layout stands before we make our break now. It will be a day or two before we get a chance at their horses, I reckon.'

We began to eat. 'Huntin',' observed Arkansaw with deep sarcasm, as he surveyed the remnant of his 'biscuit' after the first capacious bite; 'huntin'! I'm a-hunting a'ready for more to eat, an' after that for the nearest way back to Little Rock. If you two fellers want me you'd better keep your eyes peeled on me, for I'll be gosh derned if I don't just streak it out acrost the scenery from here to Arkansaw, an' I'll go so fast, I'll only hit the high places in between.'

'Here, then, take this,' grunted Buckskin, offering him the rest of his own biscuit.

But the other's blue eyes flashed fire, and, 'Drop it, Buck,' said I.

Saddling up, we got a drink out of the river in crossing, and then, on the other side, immediately found ourselves mingling with a stream of Indians of all ages and both sexes. They were all heading one way, down the river, and a few minutes' talk in the sign language let us know that this was 'issue day,' and that they were going to the Agency for rations.

Of course we couldn't come right out flat-footed and ask about the hooraw of last night, but presently we rode straight into the explanation itself. Reaching a point where we could see the Agency, there suddenly emerged from a patch of timber to our left an outfit of unmistakable significance. A cluster of young bucks, riding two-on-a-horse and bearing green branches of cottonwood in their hands, surrounded another young buck, who rode single. He carried the peeled yellow wand, with the black tuft dangling and twirling on its string, and his face was yellow with ochre, while the others were in war-paint. He had made a kill, taken a scalp; which meant—the nation being nominally at peace just then—that some outfit, red or white, had raided the river, and lost at least one man in doing so.

It appeared that during the night next before we struck the river, the whole lower half of it had been raided by a war party of other Indians from the north. These raiders had gone about the job with a most astonishing nerve, fording the bigger river below right under the very nose of the Fort, and striking openly back for their own country. There was a council gathered in no time, you may bet, and a double number of young bucks was

sent on the trail under two or three wily old chiefs, and these, by reason of the contemptuous boldness of the enemy, had overhauled them, killing two of them, and recovering most of the horses. It was the return of the war party with these two scalps which caused the uproar we heard.

'Things ain't a-looking very peeart for us,' said Buckskin, when the scalp-taker and his crowd had passed on.

'We'll go on down to the Agency, anyhow,' said I. 'I've got twenty dollars yet. We might get up a race or do a trade or something.'

Close to the Agency I got bargaining for a stoggy little grey with collar marks on him to show that he had worked. I'd got right down to business, and agreed to give eight dollars and the silk handkerchief from round my neck when up came the—well renegade, who did the tribe's interpreting. Straight away he began to pow wow with the owner of the grey; but in the spoken, not the sign language—and the price went up to twelve dollars at a jump.

I reckon I did get mad and fly off the handle a bit. I made a few remarks to that renegade that are not down in the almanac. An ordinary man would have drawn on me for it in spite of hades and high water. But this fellow was no more than just an Indian now, and so he could pull up long enough to figure out the consequences of killing three cowpunchers there at the Agency in open daylight.

Word would go over the divide to the boys on the nearest round-up—and they already owed him something. Moreover my hand was on my six-shooter, so I as good as had the drop on him.

Well, the Agent and the trader came over to the row, for the warriors had gathered like cattle to fresh blood. The whole nation was drunk with the taking of two scalps. I decided that we had better take the Agent's hint, and 'travel.'

I led the way as if going to the fort, but half a dozen miles down I turned sharp to the right across the river, and so gained the higher country towards the divide. Working slowly back we came opposite the Agency again, and from where we were hidden could watch the parties of young bucks, riding from teepee to teepee, escorting the takers of scalps, and chanting the song of them. And Arkansaw was astonished to hear that the parties of older warriors, sitting in rows or circles, were playing forfeits.

'All the same,' said Buckskin, 'we'll hardly get away with them to-night. They'll be having a scalp-dance and general jamboree after dark. That'll keep them wide awake——'

THERE SUDDENLY EMERGED AN OUTFIT OF UNMISTAKABLE SIGNIFICANCE

'Yes, I reckon it will,' I stuck in, 'till a couple of hours after midnight or so. Then we'll see what we can do. No, we're not going to raid the nation at large—though if we were seven instead of three, by Ned! I'd set 'em afoot right in the light of their dance-fire—feathers, tommyhatchets, and all. But what we are a-going to do is to get square with that—renegade (the cowboy word for it is not very pretty). You can see his teepee yonder up the river, almost by itself. He's riding one good horse, and owns half a dozen more, all picketed yonder in the brush. I reckon they'll buy us a right good outfit for hunting.'

We waited till the night was dark and the dance began before we shifted away and down to the river again. Crossing at a bend about midway between two encampments, we pushed into the brush and kept quiet till we heard the whooping of the braves returning to the upper camp from the dance. When the last of these had passed, 'Now then,' whispered I, and we stole away by the edge of the brush towards the renegade's own lodge.

We were each on the hair trigger, you may bet, and so you may guess what we felt like when we found there were lights in one or two of the lodges yet—one in the renegade's own, and the other in one at the nearer end of the camp. All the same, there was no time to lose. Already dawn was so near that we should hardly reach the divide before daylight. In a low whisper I made the new plan. Arkansaw was to mount and hold our other two horses ready. If we were discovered, then he was to dash forward, and we would mount and away, if possible. If not discovered, then he was to bide still, and hold the captured horses as we brought them up. Then softly Buckskin and I moved forward again.

Buck was born on the frontier, as I have said, and his parents had both fallen under the tomahawk; while I had lived right in the middle of things for some years—and yet I think both our hearts were full of choked-down sighs as we crawled. I left the nearest horse to him, while I passed on to the next. Cutting both loose, we tied their foot-ropes round their necks and led them back slowly at a grazing pace, without a mistake, and Arkansaw could not help a clicking little gasp as he took the ends of the two flat plaited raw hide ropes in his hand with the rest.

Then, returning, Buckskin again took the nearest, while I had to crawl forward to one so close to a darkened lodge that I dared not rise to tie him round the neck, but was forced to lie away, scarce daring to breathe, and gently pull upon his foot-

fetter till he had come close up to me. Then I snicked him loose and followed.

'Any more?' whispered Buckskin, as I joined them.

'One,' replied I. 'His. That sorrel there—you can see where the light from that teepee flap streaks on him. But you mount too, and be ready to help me if I need it.'

I was become somewhat confident by this, and yet when I reached the sorrel I felt a cold set-back as I saw at once that he was not picketed. One end of a long lasso was round his neck, and the other was passed through the flap of the teepee and held by some hand inside, where a monotonous chant was yapping on, accompanied by the beating of some old beef-tin. It was this noise which had doubtless stood us in good stead already, and yet it might cease any moment, a signal for the man at the end of that rope to come out and mount—that is, to discover all.

But it was the renegade's own horse, and I was savage to get that, even if we lost all else. Then suddenly I remembered the tale of what an Indian had done on this very river not long before, and therefore what I next did was not original.

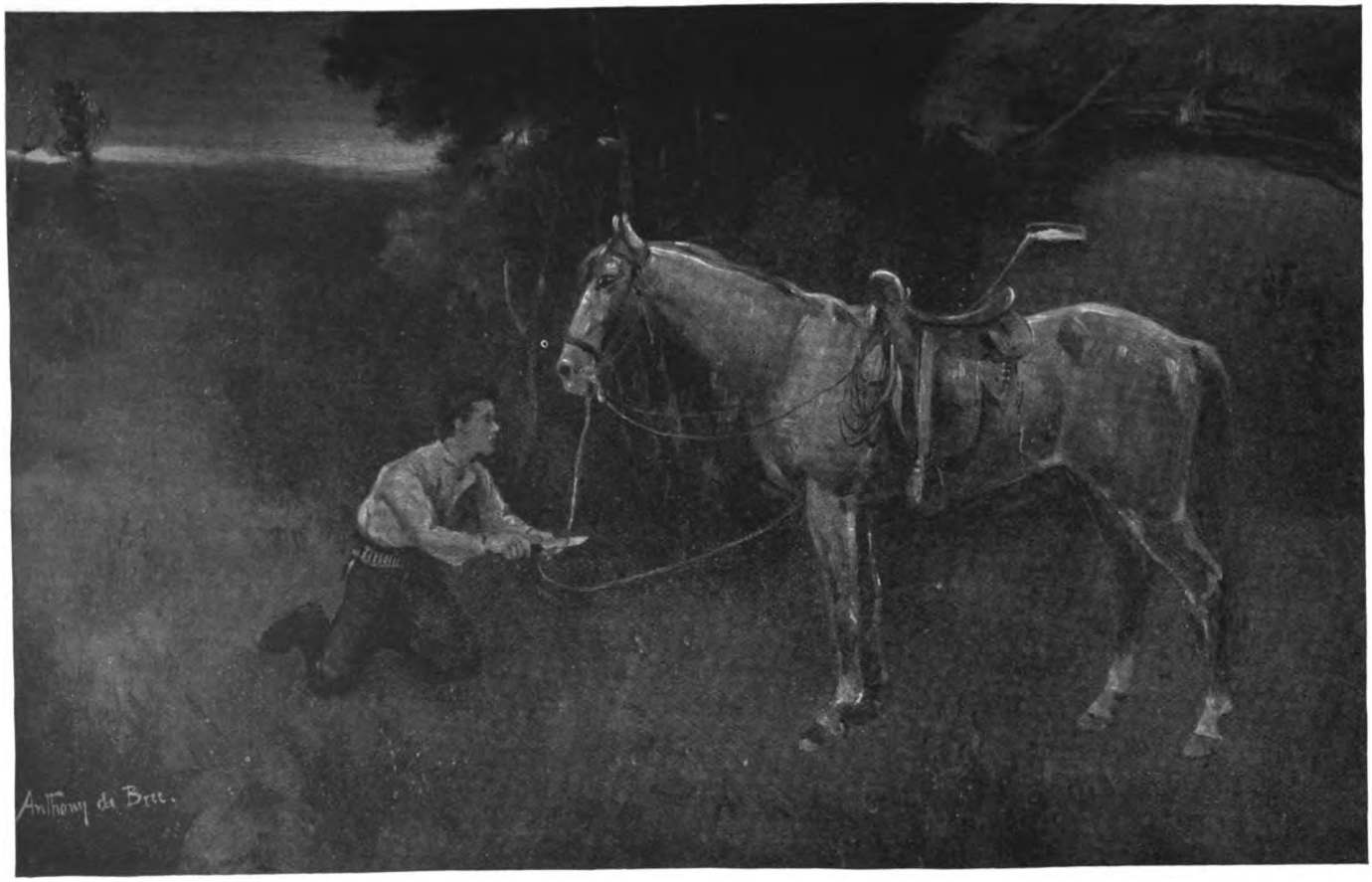
Every minute or so, the hand inside would make a couple of strong pulls on the rope, in order to make sure of the horse being still there by feeling the weight of him at the end of it. My knife was ready; I waited for the pull, and then, suddenly sawing the slack line through, tied the severed end round a lithe willow stem, so that when he should pull again he would feel a limber strength like the neck of a horse.

Another minute and the sorrel was fast to my own lasso, and thus, I leading one and the others two each, we made our way swiftly and silently to the ford again, and gained the other side.

The loss was not discovered while we were within hearing, and the sun was well up and we well over the divide before we were aware of pursuit; even then, by dint of one thing and another, we managed to keep in front till we reached our original starting-point of two days ago, too near to the country of the two tribes of their enemies for them to dare to follow us any farther.

When at last we were certain that the pursuit was over, Arkansaw wanted to know, 'Would you rather have downed that derned ——?' (naming the renegade).

'Certainly not,' replied I. 'It would have been "bad medicine" to have killed him or any of them. Besides, we did a better thing altogether last night when we cut the sorrel loose. We more than got even with him then. Just think of him sitting



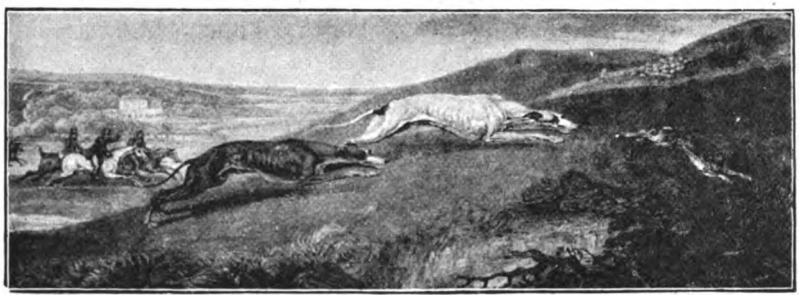
SUDDENLY SAWING THE SLACK LINE THROUGH

there in a lighted lodge, pulling every now and then at a horse with bark and leaves on it, instead of hide and hair. Just think of the willow bending and straightening as he jerked and talked, and imagine him when he came out to ride that willow stem to his own teepee! Why, man, they'll laugh him clean off the river, and his squaws will ride off with the bucks right under his very nose. It will stick to him as long as he lives.'

'B'gosh! I never thought of that. It is kinder rough on a feller. I guess we got ahead of him, after all,' said Arkansaw. 'I reckon he won't be so ready to chip in and spoil another man's trade in future.'

Time's too short for going into the details of how the sorrel horse was traded for an old waggon; of how another was traded for the rarest rifle that I ever owned, and so on and so forth; till at last we drove out of the railroad town equipped even to the square box of red pasteboard, inside which the little bottles of strychnine were prettily packed—ill omen for the grey wolves.

'That's another way, if you like,' ended he.



IRISH WINNERS OF ENGLISH CHAMPIONSHIPS

BY C. B. IRWIN, EX-CHAMPION OF IRELAND

FROM an athletic standpoint, a comparison of the relative merits of the Saxon and the Celt must prove interesting to all followers of muscular Christianity. Each seems to excel in his own particular branch of sport, and, glancing at the results of various championship and international struggles, a conclusion must force itself on him who reads.

Taking, in the first place, the results of the championships held yearly under the auspices of the Amateur Athletic Association, and therefore only carrying readers back as far as 1881, one is forced to conclude that while Englishmen are fleeter of foot and endowed with staying power superior to Irishmen, the latter are equally far ahead in what I might term the purely athletic events—the robust Irishman being practically invincible in the weight-putting department, while in the jumping results he holds a position scarcely less prominent, as a brief analysis, later on, will conclusively prove.

Let me take first the running events *seriatim*. Not once during these eighteen years has an Irishman accounted for the 100 yards. True it is that a Welshman—N. D. Morgan—who won brilliantly in 1890 and repeated the victory six years later, entered from an Irish club, and did his training in Ulster's capital, so that his victories were hailed with enthusiasm in Belfast. But this does not constitute nationality: under the leek was he born, and but temporarily grafted to the shamrock—an honour which he justly appreciates. A meritorious *proxime accessit* was achieved in 1888, when Vigne, of Dublin University, was barely robbed of victory by the speedy American Fred

Westing. This, had the gods favoured Vigne's effort, would have been claimed as an Irish triumph; yet Vigne was born somewhere in the region of the Equator, and not in Ireland at all. The medal representing the half-mile championship has never yet found its way to Ireland, while that presented to the victor in the four miles has shown a similar pertinacious objection to crossing the Channel. The steeplechase—unlike the Liverpool Grand National—has year after year, ever since its inclusion in the championship programme, fallen to the prowess of the Saxon —save once, when a Canadian bore the palm across the Atlantic. After this succession of blanks it is gratifying to an Irishman to be able to record two victories in the 440 yards—veritable oases in the surrounding waste of path failures. The names honoured in this connexion are those of Cyril Dickenson, who carried off first honours in 1892, and J. C. Meredith, who, four years later, smothered Saxon rivalry. Again must I leave a pleasant task, again revert to continued checks to Hibernian ambition. The walk has never fallen to any candidate save an Englishman, with one exception—when Meek, of New York, won. The ten miles has been even more strenuously guarded by English stayers, and continues a perquisite of the Saxon. There remains but the one mile to deal with and the list of path events closes. In this a solitary Irish victory can be recorded, and even this is not so satisfactory as my countrymen could wish. It was gained in 1888 by the redoubtable Conneff, but under circumstances which rob Ireland of much of the credit of the win. Conneff defeated such well-known giants as Pollock-Hill and Kibblewhite; but he ran under the colours of the famous Manhattan A.C. (New York). He was one of a number of prominent Irish athletes who were induced to go to the States about this time. The keen-eyed Augustus Sachs was on the alert, and wherever he beheld conspicuous athletic genius he attempted abduction. Sassenach and Celt yielded to his allurements, and many of the brightest ornaments of our arenas returned with him to the States, Conneff among them. Thus, though a genuine Irishman in every sense, the lustre of his fame has been appropriated by America. Another injustice to our distressful country.

Things assume a rosier hue, from an Irish point of view, when we turn to the remaining items of the championship programme. Thus, in the long jump, in the eighteen competitions Ireland has secured considerably over fifty per cent.—ten victories being recorded to our representatives. Last year the event was secured by that phenomenal jumper W. J. Newburn, who, since

then has covered the remarkable distance of 24 ft. 6 in. This was at Mullingar last autumn, and a contemplative countryman watching the leap being measured was heard to soliloquise 'Begorra! if I had to jump that length I'd take a car!' The high jump during the same period furnishes eight Irish successes, including, of course, the two wins by Tom Jennings; for although this fine athlete competed in the colours of Cambridge University, he was bred and born in Cork, the place of which an Irish witness said, when asked if he had ever been there, 'No, your honour, I niver was; I niver seen what you might call Cork itself, but many's the toime I helped at drawings of it.'

In the heavy department—the weight-throwing events—Ireland's superiority is still more marked. She has well-nigh monopolised the glory in these. In the 16 lb. weight competitions, no fewer than fourteen successes stand to the credit of Irishmen, including a brilliant, and I trust unfinished, sequence of six wins by the burly Denis Horgan. No less meritorious are the results for hammer-throwing, Irishmen being again prominent with fourteen victories out of the eighteen competitions. Before leaving the A.A.A. Championships, I must record a unique achievement by P. Davin. In 1881 this grand athlete carried off all four championships in the 'Field' events—winning the long jump, the high jump, the 16 lb. weight, and the hammer.

Leaving the athletic championships, let us turn to other branches of sport where Irishmen have essayed the task of wresting premier honours from the redoubtable Saxon. Glancing at the results of the All-England Lawn Tennis Championships inaugurated in 1877, we find that thrice Irishmen have carried off the palm—W. J. Hamilton having, in 1890, outplayed England's best exponents of the game, and Dr. Pim, 'the mighty slasher,' having for two consecutive years (1893 and 1894) carried the champion cup to his Irish home, while both of these players have on several occasions defeated the galaxy of English talent that annually visits Dublin in pursuit of fame.

The three leaves of our shamrock fittingly symbolise Ireland's prowess this season in the Rugby football arena, the triple crown having been won by the sturdy Hibernians. Though, of course, England still holds a strong lead in the International results, Ireland's improvement in recent years has been enormous, and the proud position of champion in all the matches, held this year by Ireland, was also gained in 1894. At the Association game the shamrock is still far inferior to the rose, the thistle, and the leek. The game is confined principally to Ulster, and, although

popular there, it shows no promise of becoming universal, as in the sister countries. The impetuousness of the Irish character seems to lend itself readily to football excellence, more particularly to Rugby, and the tornado-like rush of the Irish forwards has ever been a terror to their foes. But forwards alone cannot win a game, and to the marked improvement in the back department during the decade just about to close must be attributed Ireland's recent successes. The passing game has been thoroughly mastered, and perfect combination among the backs, supplemented by dashing forward play, has brought Ireland very much to the fore of late years.

Turning to cricket: this is essentially the national game of the Saxon, and Ireland need never hope to compete with her big sister at the pastime with any hope of proving herself a formidable rival. From time to time able exponents of the game, men qualified to shine in the best company in England, crop up among the ranks of Irish cricketers—such men as Gwynn, Browning, the brothers Hone, H. W. Jackson, and a few others; but, as a rule, our men seldom rise above mediocrity. The game does not seem to appeal to the Celt, and hence it is not surrounded with the same halo of enthusiasm that enshrines it in the land of the Saxon. There the followers of cricket are ubiquitous—every village has its club, every county its representative team, whose doings are watched with absorbing interest. Here the game is confined to limited areas: Dublin and Belfast have their clubs, and isolated provincial towns follow suit in half-hearted fashion.

The very universality of cricket in England militates against her success at lacrosse—a Canadian game extensively played in Ulster, anyhow: and, looking at the results of the International engagements at Lacrosse, we find that of the eighteen engagements Ireland vanquished the 'predominant partner' on no fewer than thirteen occasions, while in 1894 the match ended in a draw. The excellence of these achievements may be best gauged by the fact that, when a representative American team came to England in 1896, two English clubs, London and South Manchester, succeeded in defeating the visitors, men who crossed the Atlantic to expound the game to the Britisher, to instruct us in its skill, and teach us how to successfully master its intricacies. If, therefore, 'form' can be taken as a true index, lacrosse finds its best exponents in Ireland, and it would appear the game has transferred its allegiance from the new world to the old.

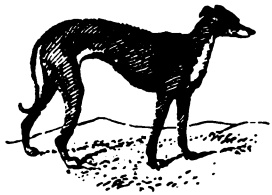
The Irishman, by general consent, is endowed with the spirit

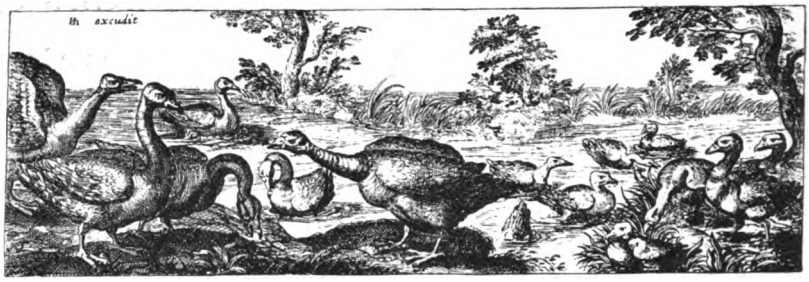
of pugnacity. It has been said of him that 'wherever he sees a head he hits it,' and yet, in scanning the list of boxing champions, one is forced to conclude either that the hot-headed Celt missed the head in the competitions for the title or that he did not see it. Where coolness and judgment must go hand in hand with courage, it would seem the Irishman, while noted for the latter attribute, has scarcely been endowed with a sufficient amount of the former to command success. True it is that among the present-day professional boxers—who pin their faith to America as a Tom Tiddler's ground—two of the most prominent men are Irish (Peter Maher and Tom Sharkey); but it is with amateur ambition that this article purports to deal, and as the great Tincler's name has been omitted from the list of path prodigies, so must the boxing professionals and their achievements be excluded from our all too meagre roll of ring heroes. Captain Edgeworth-Johnstone—who has happily, of late, been induced to write his views on boxing—is, I fear, our sole representative of championship honours across the water. We can but console ourselves with the reflection that when the green isle did breed an Amateur Champion, it bred a clinker, and trust that others will in time follow in Johnstone's footprints, and bring Ireland more prominently to the front in the competitions controlled by the Queensberry code.

In cycling Irishmen have seldom come to the fore, and only two have managed to wrest championship honours from their more powerful neighbours. I take the title as being that conferred by the National Cyclists' Union. In 1887 R. J. Mecredy, of the Dublin University B. C., out-distanced all opposition in the five miles Tricycle Championship, while three years later, when the safety, with its pneumatic tyres, came to be the recognised mount, the same rider not only proved his superiority over all the men of his year, but exhibited unwonted versatility in winning every single one of the Bicycle Championships—the one, five, twenty-five, and fifty miles. This was indeed brilliant riding, and with this flourish of trumpets Ireland's successes ceased, save for a solitary win of a tricycle championship by Stadniki. Time and again have Ireland's chosen riders attempted to win back Mecredy's old position, and as often have they returned to Erin empty handed, and ready to admit the vast superiority of English cyclists. We, in Ireland, still hope that another Mecredy may be forthcoming, that the palm may yet be borne over-seas. We are wearying of continued disappointments. Repeated defeats have grown monotonous.

I need only touch lightly on golf, primarily because we have never yet had an exponent of class enough to be in the first flight, and in the second place because it was my original intention to deal with pastimes only which possess some claim to be classed as athletic. For the same reason croquet and archery must be banned. As a nation the Irish have never been prominent in the rowing world, though no better nursery exists than Dublin University.

Before concluding it may prove of interest to 'take a line' through the foregoing championships and ask ourselves how to account for in some few instances Ireland's pronounced excellence, in others her mediocrity, in others her absolute failure, comparatively. The same opportunities for training are vouchsafed to the athletes of both countries, the same system practically is observed on both sides of the Channel. Here, as in England, the honour is highly esteemed, and the wearer of the laurel wreath lionised. It must be purely a matter of temperament. Ireland's successes at football contrast vividly with her weakness at cricket. One game appeals to players and spectators alike, the other is engaged in half-heartedly by the participants and languidly watched by the onlookers. Boxing is still in its infancy, tennis has reached the zenith of its popularity. It is at the athletic championships that recurring superiority and continuous inferiority are most marked. Verily to account for these things is beyond the writer.





THE CUNNING OF BIRDS[1]

BY JOHN BURROUGHS

ONE wide difference between men and animals—at least wild animals—is that there are practically no individual differences among the latter, none of superior wit, or of power, or beauty. True the old fox-hunters will tell you that occasionally they start a fox of superior cunning, one that will outwit them and escape time after time; and in the Adirondacks there are traditions of some particular deer that season after season baffled the hunters. But these are exceptional cases; the birds and animals of a given species are usually as near alike as two peas, or as two bees of the same kind. A few times in my life I have heard a sparrow, or a cat-bird, or a thrush that had superior powers of song, or some novel variation of song, as I have heard those that fell far below the average of their fellows in song; but such cases are rare. No doubt the birds and animals profit by experience and grow wiser with years. Has not every angler known some wary old trout that frequented a particular pool, and that was proof against his best art?

The wit of birds and animals is usually the wit of the species or tribe to which they belong, and shows little individual variation. As soon as the wild creatures are brought under the influence of man differences and peculiarities begin to crop out. The individual differences among cats and dogs, cows and horses, and among the domestic fowls are almost as great as those among men. But the finches and fly-catchers and thrushes, generation after generation, show almost a dead level of mental traits.

So much has been said about the intelligence of animals that a friend suggests that it would be interesting to hear about their

[1] Copyright in the United States and Canada by *The Youth's Companion.*

unintelligence or stupidity. I thought of the remark last spring when I saw a robin making ineffectual attempts to build a nest under the porch of my rustic house. The bird chose as the site of its nest a spot on the plate between two rafters about midway of the porch. Now the plate was round, being an undressed tree, and did not afford a good foundation. But the robin had that fact to learn from experience. She was apparently several days considering the matter and making up her mind. Finally she set to work, and early one morning carried up a lot of loose material, which would not keep its place upon the plate; a little current of air drew through under the roof and rattled the dry stems and grasses down as fast as the bird carried them up. She worked about an hour, and at the end of that time there was only one withered leaf clinging to the site of the proposed nest, while the floor beneath was covered with litter. The next morning she was at it again before the sun was up, with the same result as before; the restless material would stay upon the round timber only so long as the bird stood upon it. When she came back with a second beak full the first had already slid off. The third morning the same thing was repeated, and the fourth, and the fifth, till nearly all the available robin nest material in the vicinity was scattered about or under my porch. At last the bird learned her lesson; she deserted the porch and in a near tree prospered better.

It is always a surprise to a person unacquainted with the fact to see any of our smaller birds feeding a young cow-bird: it looks like a want of intelligence on the part of the foster-mother. She is so completely duped that the spectacle is pathetic. Walking along a road in the woods in June with a friend, our attention was attracted by the insistent calls of a young bird. A little scrutiny of the trees overhead revealed a young but full-grown cow-bird perched upon a branch. We waited for the mother bird to appear. In a minute or two a bird not much larger than one's thumb came out of the branches and paused a moment before the large dusky-feathered crying figure of the cow-bird. It was like a pigmy waiting upon a giant. It seemed as if the young glutton might almost have swallowed its fond but deluded parent. The little bird proved to be the black-throated green back warbler. Hurriedly it scoured the branches for food for its insatiable bantling. To us lookers-on it was a comedy, but to the bird itself it was almost a tragedy, and had proved so indeed to its own young. One is inclined to think, 'What a fool!' But it is to be remembered that, so far as the bird itself could see, this monster grew out of one of its own eggs, or was the product of

all the eggs, since the others came to naught. The curious and inexplicable thing about it is that though the other eggs may have hatched (I have known this to happen in the case of a chippie), this bantling should have got all the food; that the mother bird should have been, as it were, under a spell, and apparently willing that all the rest should perish for the sake of this pot-bellied intruder. The parent bird usually feeds her young in succession, as the heads usually rise up in succession; but in this case the cow-bird's head always comes up and stretches higher than the others, and the mouth opens wider, and the mother bird's attention is fixed upon it alone. Its digestive organs must work as rapidly as a grist-mill, as its cry for 'more' never ceases. It certainly grows more rapidly than other young birds, and is sooner fledged and out of the nest.

We have one bird that usually has the wit to thwart this little game of the cow-bird, and that is the summer yellow bird or yellow warbler. This little bird seems to have a more discriminating eye than most birds, as it at once refuses to accept this strange egg, and proceeds to bury it by continuing the nest above it. Nearly every large collection of birds' nests can show one or more of these double nests of the yellow warbler. I do not know that any other bird has the wit to do this.

The cow-bird herself usually has the wit, when she finds two or more eggs in a nest, to remove one before depositing her own. I have seen her do this.

Nests have been found with two cow-birds' eggs in them. In such cases it would be interesting to watch the result and see greed pitted against greed in the struggle for life. Probably the unfortunate foster-parent would exhaust itself completely in its efforts to fill the two always open mouths.

This life history of the cow-bird, the outcome of fraud and deception, prejudices one against it; yet the bird is pleasing in its manners, and its gurgling, vibrant note in spring is very welcome. The other day I reclined under a tree in the fields and observed three or four of them feeding about some cows. It was a pretty sight. The birds depended upon the cows to flush their game. Numerous little insects of one kind or another were routed out of their hiding places in the grass by the grazing cattle, and these the cow-birds lay in wait for. They kept running all about the feet and noses of the herd, like miniature black hens, seizing the insects as they sprang up, sometimes running several feet to overtake one. I almost feared they would get stepped on, they hovered so perilously near the cows' feet, but they did not. The

IT SEEMED AS IF THE YOUNG GLUTTON MIGHT ALMOST HAVE SWALLOWED ITS FOND BUT DELUDED PARENT

bird is a pretty walker and graceful in form. It is this association with the grazing cattle that has given it its name.

Birds show their cunning in the concealment of their nests, and in the care they take lest they betray the secret. The nest is something to be hidden with more care than you would hide your thousands in a country of thieves where there were no locks and keys. The crows, the jays, the owls, the squirrels, the snakes, the weasels, the collectors, are all looking for it, and the effort to elude them has developed the wit of the bird in this particular in a remarkable degree. Her trick is open concealment, as if you were to hide your diamonds in the coal scuttle and your notes among the waste paper. The deepest thickets and tangles she avoids; what would afford a cover to her would afford a cover to her enemy. Concealment without pretence of concealment is her game.

The bobolink hides her nest on the principle of a needle in a haystack, the little in the vast, a broad meadow, and a little circle of freckled eggs in the midst of it. To blend the nest with its surroundings, to make it a part of the rock or limb or ground, is always the aim of every bird

The other day I discovered the nest of a humming-bird in an oak tree. The nest was practically invisible until the bird had guided the eye to it, so completely was it made a part of the branch upon which it was saddled by being covered with lichens. I noticed that the bird had chosen a branch which could not become the highway of a squirrel in his passage from tree to tree. If this was intuitional on her part, it was a rare stroke of judgment.

The male bird of every species delights to cheer the sitting mate with his song, but how careful he is that his song shall not guide you to the nest! The nest is the centre around which he revolves, keeping within good earshot. Take several of the extreme points from which the song is uttered, and then explore the middle ground, and you will probably find the nest. Day after day this season I used to hear a chat going through his curious vocal performance in a maple tree by the roadside where I peered morning and evening. All about, comprising several acres, was the low tangled bushy growth which the chat loves. The nest is there somewhere, I said, and when I have leisure, and the mood suits, I will find it. But I will not look here near this maple; I will go to the other end of the field. So one day I began my search at a point where I had never heard the chat calling, and very soon had the secret, a thick compact nest, three feet from the ground, with five speckled eggs. Each time I visited it the mother quietly and speedily slipped off, and disap-

peared in the bushes so quickly, that I barely caught a glimpse of her. She made no demonstration whatever, which I thought very good tactics.

The large-billed water-thrush, or water-accentor (?), outwitted me completely this season with regard to its nest. There is always a peculiar pleasure in finding the nest of this bird, because it is not common, and because it is always in an interesting situation, and is a work of great secrecy and cunning. I wanted especially to find one this June to show a friend from whom I expected a visit, and who had never seen this nest. I was living at a rustic house, with the woods through which flowed a rocky stream, much frequented by the accentors, on one side of me, and a few acres of muck land, which had been drained and cleared, on the other side of me. Daily I heard the birds singing in the creek valley below me, and daily I saw one come up the little spring run that drained the muck land and that flowed past my door, but no clue to a nest could I get. The bird that came up my spring run, usually near sundown, was always in a great hurry: he tarried only a moment or two, never sang, and returned swiftly toward the main creek, near which I fancied the nest to be. But all my watching and searching was fruitless. My friend came, a noted ornithologist, but I had no water-thrushes' nest to show. All the time the nest was within a few yards of my own door. When I planted my melons and corn I could have reached it with my hoe handle, but not one sign from the birds till the young were fledged. One morning my attention was attracted by an unusual calling and chiding from what I took to be water-thrushes just around a little bend in the spring run, and on the edge of my primitive garden. I was quickly upon the scene, when I beheld four or five young water-thrushes hopping about on the banks of the run, being chided or directed—I could not tell which—by their much-agitated parents. Well, I said, the nest was here under my very nose after all. When I am again looking for something rare I will shake my own door-mat before I start on a voyage around the world. When the mother bird saw me she came almost up to my very feet, and trailed her plumage and kept up a great bluster to cover the retreat of the young, which had apparently come out of the nest a little prematurely. Without stirring from my tracks I saw the vacant nest just opposite me above the rill of water under a large root in the ditch bank. The birds had chosen me as a neighbour, but they had been very careful not to let me know anything about it.

BIG GAME HUNTING IN NORTHERN SPAIN

BY HENRY GOODALE

I BELIEVE it is not generally known that some thirty hours from London there exists a country where the tourist has not yet penetrated, a country almost unexplored by Englishmen, and full of interest to the naturalist and sportsman; I allude to the north-western provinces of Spain—roughly speaking, from the river Bidassoa on the east, which forms the boundary between France and Spain, to Cape Finisterre on the west.

This is a land of snow-capped mountains, rushing salmon rivers, extensive forests of oak, beech, and chestnut, and alpine scenery with fir woods as the summits of the mountains are neared—the greatest heights being in the Picos de Europa, which tower into the sky some 9,000 feet above sea-level. Here is the home of the Spanish bear, chamois, roe-deer, wolf, and many other wild animals of less note. Apart from game birds, of which there are a fair number, various other birds are to be found which are now rare or quite extinct at home, such as eagles, harriers, great black and great spotted woodpeckers, &c. Then in spring and autumn there are visitors arriving daily, for this country is right in the line of the migrants, from strong-flying brent-geese and widgeons, to delicate golden-crested wrens and tiny blue-tits.

Biarritz stands at the very gateway of the easiest road south for the small birds. Along its sheltered cliffs on a sunny autumn

morning I have often seen the scrub alive with little travellers, flitting merrily from bush to bush whilst waiting for a slant in the wind or some favourable sign in the weather to continue their journey. If one goes to look for them on the following day, perhaps there will not be one left; they will have started on a voyage of several hundred miles across snow mountains and barren elevated plains, swept by the bitterest blasts of the four winds of the earth. This they must accomplish before they reach the sunny clime of southern Spain, and thence over the sea to the still sunnier land of Africa. Yet when we saw them yesterday they didn't seem to be so strong in their flight as an average bumble-bee. How do they manage to do it?

My first attempts at Spanish big game were made during mid-winter in the province of Santandér. I arrived at the town of that name one bitterly cold night in December, armed with various letters of introduction to people in the neighbourhood, and was at once asked to spend a week in the mountains about fifty miles from Santandér, at the shooting-lodge of one of the best sportsmen in northern Spain. Great hopes were held out to me of getting a shot at a bear; indeed, it was mainly on account of these animals that I had undertaken a winter trip, for I had heard many stories of their size and fierceness.

About the quantity and size I have satisfied myself. Bears there are, and big ones; but owing to the extent of the forests they are extremely difficult to bring to bag: and although I have had a fair amount of success with other hill game, with bears, both in summer and winter, bad luck has persistently dogged my footsteps. I have frequently been close to them, as shown by their tracks at the end of a beat, though on account of the thick covert I have never so much as had a glimpse of one.

On one occasion two passed in the open within thirty yards of a native. He had been placed to fill a possible but unlikely 'pass,' and was armed with an ancient weapon loaded with pieces of lead cut up with a pocket-knife. He fired, of course, and either made a clean miss, or the bear was a particularly amiable one; otherwise he would not have escaped without a bad mauling. No sooner had I reached England from my last expedition than I received a letter saying a charcoal-burner had killed a bear 'as big as an ox' with an old muzzle-loader and a round bullet in the self-same valley I had been hunting in the week previous with two Spanish friends who had a dozen trained dogs and who knew the district thoroughly! Such, then, is the chase of the Iberian bear—a matter of absolute luck!

Accompanied by a Spanish friend I left Santandér for the lodge in the hills, and we arrived there late in the evening. I had pictured to myself a cold, thin-walled, little chalet; so imagine my surprise on finding a large country house, heated with hot-water pipes, and containing many other luxuries that one would never think of finding in an out-of-the-way district in old-world Spain. A huge log fire blazed in the smoking-room, which was a real treat to see after living for several days in the carpetless, comfortless room of an hotel, trying to extract a little warmth from a few smouldering sticks.

THE END OF A BEAT

There were four guns assembled in the house for the shoot, and I spent a delightful evening listening to stories of wild life in the hills. My host's experience extending over a period of thirty years, he had something interesting to tell about every bird and beast of the mountains. But early to bed had to be the order. There would be a four hours' ride in the morning to reach the hunting-ground, and we must needs be up before dawn.

I scarcely seemed to have been asleep ten minutes that night when I was awakened by a bright light in the room. There was my host already dressed, saying it was half-past four, and with the usual Spanish politeness he inquired if it would be convenient for me to get up, as if it should happen to suit me all was ready for a start. Downstairs I found the rest of the party

drinking their coffee or chocolate, and in a few minutes we went to the big courtyard at the back of the house.

The moon was just setting behind the snow-covered hills which surround the house, throwing a weird white light over the dusky figures flitting about the courtyard and the ponies standing saddled waiting for us. A door was thrown open, and out came the hounds, some twenty-five in number and of all breeds, but crosses of foxhounds predominating. My host spoke to them in the language of the English kennel, which sounded very amusing, seeing he knew but few other words of our language; but, having a great admiration for fox-hunting and other English sports, he had learned a lot of familiar phrases of the hunting-field, and his shooting-dogs were all broken to 'down charge,' &c.

It was a picturesque scene as we trotted along in the early morning light, all wearing the comfortable native *capote* or riding-cloak, with rifles slung across. By the way, these same *capotes* are fine things for rough work in the hills; they consist simply of a heavy rug with a hole in the middle of it, through which one's head is thrust, and when in the saddle can be arranged to cover one all round to below the knees. When not in use they can be easily strapped to the pommel, and they make an excellent bedding at night if one has to sleep on the floor. The more pretentious ones have the motto of their owner embroidered on the hem, a relic of mediæval times.

We were soon out of what could be called a road, and struck into a mountain path, where all had to go in single file. In every bit of soft ground on the grassy slopes I noticed small holes bored. My host told me this was the work of woodcock, there being numbers of them all over the country; but only small bags of them could be made, he said, unless the weather came very severe, as, feed being so plentiful, they were much scattered.

As we ascended, thickly-wooded valleys opened out on either side; these were to be our beats for the day. Hunting is always carried out in the woods by means of a pack of hounds, the thickness of the covert precluding all possibility of stalking: The guns being posted in likely places round the top of some gorge, the huntsmen cast the hounds in the bottom. Bears will rarely come on to the guns, but there is generally the chance of an old tusker or a roe, for both pig and roe-deer are fairly numerous. There are also wolves, but they are extremely wide-awake, and always manage to steal away. We often saw their tracks, and, judging from the size of these, they are large animals. Spanish sportsmen tell me it is the rarest thing to shoot one, for they

nearly always break back through beaters and dogs, or lie *perdu* on some ledge of rock till the chase has passed by. Thus they avoid the rifle-bullet, to become victims to poison later on, when they develop too great a fondness for mutton and lamb—a very common failing among them. The site of our first beat was a semicircular high ridge, forming a summit towards which three wooded gorges converged. The hounds had left us some time previously to reach the bottom of one of these ravines, and were to begin drawing at the signal of a shot fired by us; so the guns were at once posted, my host assigning me a likely looking place; and there, seated on a warm *capote* behind a mound, from which I could see, but not be seen, I had time to take a survey of the surrounding country. Below me lay a deep gorge, wooded with ilex and stunted oaks, and a thick undergrowth of bracken, male-fern, and brambles; in the distance a good-sized lake glistened between the hills, looking very blue and cold on this wintry morning. It must surely be full of trout, possibly big ones; probably no artificial insect had ever floated on its surface. What a charming place it would be in the spring-time! But my soliloquies were cut short by the music of the hounds; they appeared to have found game almost directly they got into covert. They were nearly a mile away, but with my glasses I could see the light-coloured ones bustling through the undergrowth; and then the whole chorus of them came up together, with the musical cry of the huntsman, 'Levantado!' 'Levantado!' 'He's afoot!' 'Gone away!' The music of the hounds came nearer, and excitement began to grow intense; then about 500 yards below me a large black animal dashed out of covert, but immediately plunged into the valley again, closely followed by a big Andalusian boar-hound and some half-dozen more of the pack. I saw at a glance it was a pig, for I had had some experience of them in Albania, and I had great hopes he would come my way, but in a few minutes I saw him emerge from the wood on the other side of the valley and boldly breast the steep hill—unfortunately in the opposite direction to where any of the guns were posted—and he soon disappeared over the sky-line with that easy canter peculiar to wild pigs, which gives them the appearance of moving quite slowly, when in reality they are travelling like race-horses. A few hounds straggled after him, but of course it was useless to follow, for piggy was on his way to a well-known stronghold of dense forest and rocks, from which it would be impossible to dislodge him; so the horn was blown to recall the stragglers, and presently the huntsman came up, saying there had

been three pigs afoot, but that two of them had broken back. It was now proposed to take the hounds to the bottom of the second valley, which converged to the top of the hill, and while this was being done saddle-bags were produced containing an excellent luncheon, which by this time we were all ready for.

After beating two more valleys with negative results, although there were pig in both of them, my host went with the hounds himself, a truly arduous undertaking, for the huntsman has to keep up with them more or less all the time, breaking through the roughest of covert, and always going uphill. However, he was well rewarded for his efforts, as hounds were soon giving tongue lustily, and in a few minutes a pig broke to my left, to be neatly rolled over by Don B——'s rifle. He was not a very large boar, but had some nice tusks, and there was great rejoicing over him, for it had seemed like ending in a blank day.

The evening was now closing in, and we had a long ride home before us; indeed, there were five men who had to walk. These hardy fellows had been on their feet since four o'clock in the morning, and were yet 'going strong.'

It was pitch dark before we reached the bottom of the mountain, and I little relished riding down some of the narrow paths covered with loose stones, and with a sheer drop of several hundred feet on one side. I lay the reins on my pony's neck, lest I should involuntarily check him, it being safer under these circumstances to trust to one's pony than to one's own hands.

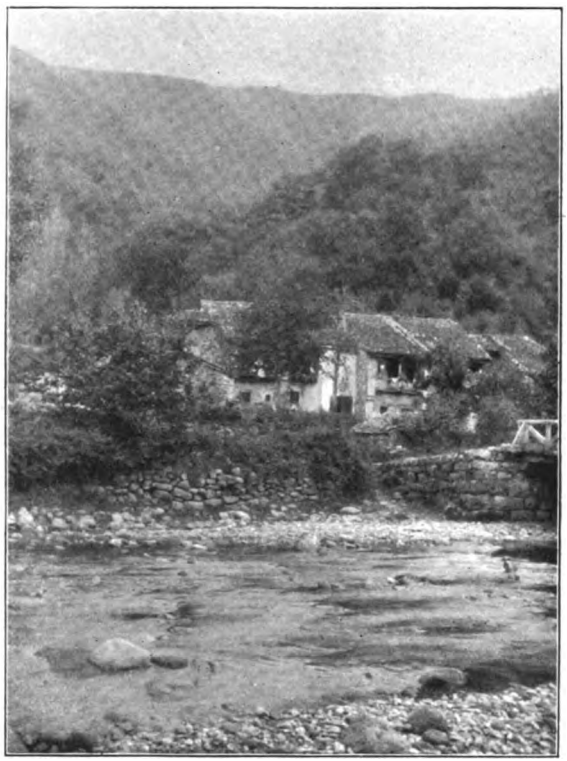
The next morning we were up again between four and five o'clock, and went to a beat which is celebrated for roe-deer, very much the same manœuvres being carried out as on the first day; but in the afternoon a regular deluge of rain came on, and the ride home that night was something to be remembered. It was bitterly cold, two rivers which we had crossed in the morning with no difficulty had now become roaring torrents, and we had a dreadful business to get the ponies across the fords safely.

Thus a week slipped away, sometimes blank days, sometimes good sport, but always plenty of hard work. My host assured me that there were bears in the district, and even that it was no uncommon thing for them to kill cattle in hard winters. This sounds strange, but it is an undoubted fact, and it made me all the more anxious to secure a specimen; but no opportunity occurred, so I will pass on to another day's shooting in the early autumn of the year and in a different district.

On a fine morning early in September we left Santandér by

train for the terminus station of Carbezon de la Sal. From there we were to drive to the little mountain village of Saja for a week at the big game in the district.

My friend Don R—— was in command of this expedition, and with him two friends, half a dozen couple of his hounds, and four men as beaters, old hands of Don R——'s, who could hunt his hounds and knew every inch of the country, their occupation for part of the year being that of charcoal-burners in the forests



OUR QUARTERS AT SAJA

we were going to hunt in. Each had a rusty old gun, to be used, if occasion should offer, on pig or deer at close quarters, though on the former it would be rather a dangerous experiment, as old tuskers have an unpleasant habit of charging furiously when wounded, and, if there doesn't happen to be a tree handy, there is a warm time in store for the shooter.

In this trip we had great hopes of a bear, for from all reports there were several in the neighbourhood, and no hunting had

been done there except by local talent since the previous winter. If a bear could be killed, surely it would fall to our lot, as we had the best of hounds, the best of hunters, and were all armed with the right sort of weapon; for every Spaniard who shoots much has a gun and rifle purchased from a first-class London maker, and many of them are not only good shots, but know where and how to find their game.

A diligence with four mules was waiting for us at the station, and—some inside, some out—we managed to pack ourselves and dogs.

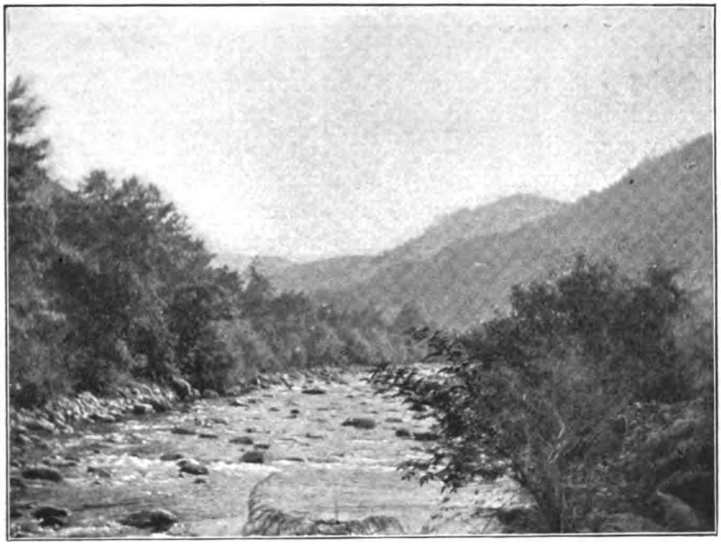
It was a long drive to Saja, the road being against the collar most of the way, but so well engineered and macadamised that the mules had a fairly easy time of it. This is the case with nearly all the roads in the north of Spain, which is rather the reverse of what one would expect; but Spain is a land of surprises. For example, it is no uncommon thing to find a good installation of electric light in some out-of-the-way village, where the bare necessaries of life are scarcely obtainable, and the rudiments of sanitation entirely unknown.

I was delighted with the country as we drove along, and the views of the river Saja winding through the bottom of a deep valley were very beautiful; it looked a perfect fishing stream, and I determined to try it on the first opportunity. Our quarters at Saja were in a curious tumble-down old house by the side of the river; it was the 'posada'—wine-shop and store of the neighbourhood. The village consists of about a dozen other houses of the most primitive character, a stable underneath for animals and fowls; from it a wooden ladder or rickety old stair leads to two or three living-rooms above. Every house has a wooden balcony, on which are hung great bunches of red and green pimentos and strings of bright yellow maize. Some of the balconies are fancifully carved, others covered with trailing vines or creepers. Often the crumbling walls of the old houses find support in the strong limbs of a large fig-tree—at this time of the year densely covered with dark-green foliage—or are half-leaning on some friendly walnut that has seen generations pass out of the little dark door to take their place in the fenced-in cemetery on the face of the green hill opposite, which looks down on the old houses and the river singing its way through the valley below. Inside our 'posada' we found ready for us three beautifully clean bedrooms, leading into a 'salon'—which is evidently the pride of the house—decorated with highly coloured chromos of the Virgin, realistic representations of the deaths of some of

the leading Saints, wreaths of everlastings under glass covers which evidently had once served their time on the grave of a departed, and then, oddly enough, there was a coloured print of a steeplechase between a British Lancer and a Hussar regiment.

We were served with an excellent dinner, one item of which, a dish of fine trout, excited my curiosity as to how they were caught; but unfortunately that question is hardly worth asking—it is always the net or the night-line.

As usual, we had to be up before dawn, and here we had to trust to our own legs, the luxury of ponies not being obtainable. However, we chartered two of the villagers to carry luncheon, &c.,



EL RIO SAJA

and I also got a boy to take my camera. A splendid little chap he was, often insisting on shouldering my rifle as well when the pull uphill was extra hard, and he saw the 'Señor Inglés' was getting pumped.

Even with the invariable delay common to all Spanish shooting parties, we were well up the sides of the mountains before the sun had coloured the grey of the morning sky.

For the first hour it was an almost perpendicular ascent; then we were on the top for the time being, and had a few miles of level walking; then another steep rise through a magnificent forest of chestnut and oak, the floor of which was carpeted with several kinds of heath, most of it in full bloom. I picked no fewer

than six varieties, and put them carefully into envelopes—to be lost, of course, later on. But what was of more importance to us at present was a large patch of bilberries, the fruit of which had been gathered by a bear, and, by the marks he left, a large one too. In one place he had apparently laid down and rolled among the bushes, having eaten his fill of the fruit.

A little further on we came to a spring of ice-cold water, a very acceptable find, for now the sun was well up, and even penetrating into the shade of the forest. Here also we found the recent tracks of roe-deer, and all the soft boggy ground below the spring had been turned up and wallowed in by pigs. Evidently there was plenty of 'stuff' about, and we should be in luck if we could induce it to go the right way.

At the end of this arm of the forest we came out on a bare hill, with thickly wooded valleys on either side of it. This was to be our first beat. Two of the men had left us an hour before to reach, by a circuitous route, the bottom of one of the valleys, and at a given hour were to turn the hounds in, as we did not like to risk firing a gun for a signal. The hour appointed gave us ample time to get to our posts, and a few minutes after we had settled ourselves a blast on the horn was heard in the bottom of the valley a mile away, letting us know the beat had started.

The face of the hill on which we were posted was covered with thick heather in full bloom, and we could completely surround the top of the valley, so that nothing could come out without giving a chance to one of us. Here and there were a few stunted oak-trees, blown over on one side by the prevailing westerly winds, and one which had succumbed at last to the winter gales gave me, behind its upturned roots, a secure shelter. This was in the middle, and a most likely place for a bear, pig, or deer to pass. I could hear the hounds giving tongue from the bottom of the valley; they had found something, but they were a long way off, and I thought it would be a good half-hour before any game would break covert. It had been my experience to see animals stick to the woods till they were forced out by the hounds, and this made me perpetrate an act which covered me with shame and humiliation for the rest of the day, and humbled me for many days after. It came about in this way; but to explain it I must go back to the early morning. The average Spaniard takes nothing in the morning but a tiny cup of chocolate, sweet as syrup; and though perhaps he has risen at daylight, he will go over the roughest hills till one and often two o'clock in the afternoon with neither bite nor sup, when, as may be imagined,

he can do with rather a large supply of luncheon. My interior economy resents this long fast, and makes the hills towards the end of the morning look double as steep and high as they really are. I therefore pocket some sandwiches before starting, which, eaten about eleven o'clock, carry me on very well to my Spanish friends' lunch-time. On this particular day I had some extra nice ones, made from a sweet-cured ham of Estremadura, and while I sat behind my shelter I began to think what a long time it was since we turned out that morning. I consulted my watch ;

A SHOOTING PARTY

it was half-past ten. Then I remembered those sandwiches, and a fiend behind me said, 'You had better eat them now, you know; there's plenty of time. If you wait till the beat is over, you will be obliged to offer some to other people, and you've really only enough for yourself. Of course you couldn't carry more, on account of the weight; but still it would look greedy to worry them all yourself. So eat them now.' I listened to the tempter. I took out the little parcel, and was fumbling with a knot in the string when I suddenly *felt* aware of a large brown animal passing close by me. I looked up, and there was the biggest roe-deer I have seen

in my life, going with an easy swinging canter up the hill, not more than twenty-five yards from me. No red-hot cinder was ever dropped quicker than I dropped that packet of sweet ham sandwiches and snatched up the rifle which was laying beside me, loaded, but not cocked. Precious seconds were lost in pulling up the triggers, and more in fumbling with the sights; then, bang! bang! and exit roe over the sky-line, my two bullets humming away harmlessly into the blue atmosphere over his hind quarters.

Oh, sickening sensation! How I cursed my own foolishness and all the pigs of Estremadura besides! Roe-deer at home I have looked on with contempt; but the real wild animal, shot with a rifle, is quite another affair. This one seemed as big as a red deer, he had a particularly good head, and in a country like Spain chances of the sort don't happen every day. To add to my mortification, this terrible *contretemps* took place in full view of all the other guns. No use saying later on, 'M'yes, I fired two shots. but it was an almost impossible chance.' True, when I *did* fire, the shot was difficult enough; but, had I been looking out, it was a chance scarcely possible to miss. Yet I felt it was hard luck, for in all my Spanish shooting I had ever been keenly on the alert, and in spite of many blank days had never allowed myself even to take a sketch-book out of my pocket during the long waits, for fear of missing an opportunity. No more game came my way that beat, or indeed for the rest of the day, which, no doubt, I richly deserved; but I heard a single shot to my left, and a little later, when guns and beaters collected round my unfortunate post, one of them was carrying over his shoulders a roe which Don R—— had shot.

Then I had to face the music, the searching inquiries as to what I had been doing; for not to have seen the deer till he was right on the top of me was far worse than missing him. I had to give a complete explanation of the whole affair, and at last I think they understood that after all I was the greatest sufferer. But the sun had gone behind the clouds for me that day, and I knew my character as at any rate a keen shot was seriously damaged. Fortunately I was able to regain it before leaving the happy valley of Saja, but the story of the sweet ham sandwiches is a standing joke against me.

We lunched by the side of a sweet little trout stream, but on the banks of one of its deep rocky pools I picked up the remains of some quick-lime! No use fishing there, for the charcoal-burners who had last been in the neighbourhood had evidently taken with them a supply of lime to poison the stream, and, for

the sake of getting a few fish, killed hundreds of others. Don R—— shrugged his shoulders. 'It is against the law,' he said, 'but you can't stop it.' All over these provinces of Spain there are lovely trout streams, and, although some are nominally preserved and have a close time, the worst kind of poaching goes on all the year round; funnel-nets on the shallows, splash-nets in the pools, dynamite and quick-lime whenever they are obtainable. If there are roads or railways in construction, or mines working in the neighbourhood of a river, it is scarcely worth while to take out the rod, for dynamite will have been freely used on the pools. Many promising streams with fine deep pools and long runs have I

THE HOME OF THE SPANISH CHAMOIS

fished, with the poorest of results; long days of hard work being only rewarded with very meagre baskets. I need not prolong the description of the death of individual animals, which is always more or less the same, and must be somewhat wearisome to the reader; so I will merely say that, although we only had one blank day at Saja, we did not get even a chance at a bear. But I have by no means given up hopes of bagging one during some future trip.

Space will not allow me to say much about the chamois in the high peaks. There the shooting is always carried out by means of driving, but I cannot help thinking that good bags and far better sport could be had by stalking, now that there are weapons with

such a flat trajectory as the Lee-Metford and Mannlicher rifles. But Spaniards prefer to go in large parties and drive, taking a few days of the most arduous toil, when wind and limb are strained to breaking-point, and then hasten back to the luxuries of civilisation again.

For many years to come, Spain is likely to be a stronghold of wild Nature in Europe. Her late disastrous wars have been an enormous drain on the population, and almost every family, in even remote hill villages, mourns the loss of some of its members. This means larger tracts of country left to the birds and beasts of the field where before their allowance was a very liberal one.

Of life among the natives I can say nothing but good. They are kind and hospitable to the highest degree, ever ready to amuse and entertain a visitor, and are nearly all possessed of a charming manner and inborn politeness which at once makes the stranger feel at home. Of one thing, however, I must warn the intending visitor. He should acquire a moderate knowledge of the language before going to the country, for, as soon as he gets away from the large towns, he will find no one who speaks any language but Spanish. To take an interpreter would be irksome, and moreover the class of individual who has learned enough English, and would accept pay to act in that capacity, has also probably acquired much other undesirable knowledge, which the traveller will find out at a serious cost to his pocket.

THE LAST CAMPING MATCH

BY WILLIAM A. DUTT

'The contests were not unfrequently fatal to many of the combatants. I have heard old persons speak of a celebrated camping, Norfolk against Suffolk, on Diss Common, with 300 on each side. Before the ball was thrown up, the Norfolk men inquired tauntingly of the Suffolk men if they had brought their coffins! The Suffolk men after fourteen hours were the victors. Nine deaths were the result of the contest within a fortnight. These were called "fighting camps," for much boxing was practised in them.'—*Extract from Spurden's Supplement to Forby's 'Vocabulary.'*

It was a surprise to me to find a man still living in Suffolk who could remember the days when camping was one of the most popular pastimes in East Anglia. The old game has so long been abandoned as to be almost forgotten, and it is a rare occurrence to meet with someone who has any idea of the nature of the old-time encounters. Those who have heard of it usually associate it with the old-fashioned wrestling matches and ring-fights, which once aroused so much enthusiasm among the sporting fraternities of Norwich, Yarmouth, and other East Anglian centres; but if you ask them how the game was played and who were its chief supporters you will soon realise how little they know about it. Yet there was a time when a noted English statesman not only encouraged camping, but arranged many matches, maintaining that such contests combined all 'athletic excellences,' a good camper having of necessity to be a skilled boxer, swift runner, and clever wrestler. In the fifteenth century the game had not only the sanction but support of the Church, for we read that at Swaffham a field adjoining the churchyard,

known as a 'camping-land,' was willed for the purpose by the rector. In Suffolk the game declined towards the end of the eighteenth century on account of two men having been killed at a match at Easton; but it was still played there at times for a quarter of a century later, and it was in that county that the old man I met witnessed the last camping match.

Before recording the old man's recollections I will give a brief account of how I came to meet him. I had been out one winter day on Breydon, that large waste of tidal waters into which flow the Yare, Bure, and Waveney. I had had for a companion one of the best known of the local punt-gunners, and together we had followed the wild-fowl flocks from flat to flat that the ebbing tide left bare. As dusk approached we drew our punt—locally known as a gun-boat—into one of the dykes which intersect the surrounding marshlands, and in the early gloaming picked our way across a sedgy marsh to the punt-gunner's home. It was arranged that I should spend the night at his cottage in order to be ready to return to the flats before daybreak; but as we had a long evening before us, my companion suggested that we should pay a visit to an old gunner, who lived not far from the shores of Breydon, and who was noted for his graphic descriptions of his fishing and fowling experiences. Glad of an opportunity for hearing something of the days which the present Breydoners speak of as 'good old times for the gunners,' I at once acceded, and in less than half an hour we had traversed a length of level marshland highway and arrived at the old gunner's home. We were accompanied by my guide's son, a young marshman, who had just returned from witnessing a football match at Yarmouth. We owed it to him that we were treated to the old gunner's camping reminiscences.

We had talked for some time of fishing and fowling, and the old man had, for a few moments, lapsed into silence, as though pondering over Breydon's past glories, when the young marshman interjected a remark about football. The old gunner listened, but for a time displayed no interest in what we said about the popular game. Suddenly, however, the conversation seemed to suggest something to him, for he roused himself, tapped his black wooden pipe on the fireplace, and said:

'Football! Ah, that's the game what some folk say is werry much like the owd campin' matches, ain't it? I never seed a game o' football in my life, though I once seed "kickin'-camp" played; but I reckon it ain't half sich a game as campin' was. I can remember the last campin' match as was ever played in

these parts, and I believe it was the last game played in England.'

The young marshman was disposed to decry camping, though he admitted he had heard very little about it; but I was anxious to hear what the old man had to say concerning the game, and, after a little persuasion, he gave us the following account of the last match played on the camping-land at Burgh Castle:

'It was close upon sixty years ago,' he said, 'that the match was played, and it was between a side of twelve men from Yarmouth and twelve of the best men in the Walsham Hundred. The game was fixed for a Saturday afternoon, and the campin'-land was down the Butt Lane at Burgh Castle. There hadn't been a campin' match there for some time, a-cause some people had made a lot of to-do about the roughness of the game; but that didn't make no differs to folks about Burgh, who were nearly all mad to see a good match. All through the Saturday mornin' men kept comin' into Burgh from towns and villages for miles around. There were fishermen from Yarmouth, Lowestoft, and the broads and rivers; gunners from Breydon; eel-catchers from the North River; wherrymen, smelters, and labourers from almost every farm between Norwich, Yarmouth, and Lowestoft. Most of them brought their dinners with them, and ate them on the campin'-land afore the game begun.

'The campin'-land at Burgh was about 150 yards long, and from 50 to 60 yards wide. At each end there was a goal made of a bent willow wand, having both ends stuck into the ground. Some of the old campin' matches were played with two goals at each end of the field, but at Burgh there was only one, and the players had to do their best to carry the ball into the t'other side's goal. There were not many rules to the game, and it was played somethin' in this fashion. The two sides drew up opposite each other, but some way apart in the middle of the field. Then a man who was not playin' threw up the ball—which was a leather one about the size of a man's fist—and the players all rushed to catch it as it fell. As soon as a man got it he ran for goal, all the players on the t'other side doin' their best to stop him by trippin', jostlin', and howdin' him. If he found he couldn't get through, he chucked the ball to another player on his own side; but if he was held while he'd got the ball a notch was counted to the t'other side. Whenever a man carried the ball into goal it counted as one notch, and seven notches won the game.

'The match began about two o'clock, and by that time there was a crowd six or seven deep all round the campin'-ground.

The players were the pick of Yarmouth and the Walsham Hundred, and fine chaps they looked when they stripped their coats and shirts off and tightened their waist-belts. The Walsham men had the most supporters, but there were lots of folks from Yarmouth there, and among them a tidy few thieves and roughs out of the "Rows," who always went to campin' matches to pick pockets, blackguard, and fight. There was plenty of cheerin' and chaffin' when the players came out, and everybody looked for a tough game, a-cause it was known that some of them had grudges against each other, and meant to settle them on the field.

'As soon as the players were ready and the judges had taken their places against the goals, young Morton, the squire's son, threw up the ball and cleared off the field as hard as he could cut. Afore the ball fell half the players were in a heap on the ground, kickin' and strugglin' and so mixed up that you couldn't tell one man from another. A long-armed smelter from Berney Arms managed to hit the ball clear of the coil, and afore the men who were floored had got on to their feet a little chap from Reedham had got it and was makin' for goal like a hare. He'd nearly got there when a big hulkin' wherryman slung him off his feet; but afore he fell he chucked the ball to another player on his side, who rushed into goal with it afore anyone could get near him. This was all done in less than a minute. The Walsham men had scored a notch while the Yarmouth men—or "Bloaters," as we called them—hadn't touched the ball. Of course the crowd kicked up a rare duller, and one or two Yarmouth chaps got a-fightin' with Walshamers who'd knocked their hats off and chucked them into the field.

'After that notches came slower, but at the end of half an hour Walsham Hundred had got three notches and Yarmouth hadn't one. Then a big, black-faced gipsy named Pinfold, who got a livin' by horse-dealin' at Yarmouth, held a Walsham man and gained a notch for his side. This gipsy was a great favourite with the Yarmouth crowd, for he was a noted ring-fighter, a fast runner, and as slippery as an eel. Almost as soon as the ball was started after he had held the man he got it again, and dodged and tricked his way all down the field till he got into goal. Then a chap named Betts was hurt and had to be carried off the field. He was a Yarmouth man who had boasted that he would pay off an old score during the afternoon, but the man he laid for landed him first and broke some of his ribs. Losin' a man seemed to put the Yarmouth men on their mettle, for they scored two more notches in less than ten minutes.

'The Walsham men made the scores equal after a hard tussle in which several players were knocked about until they could scarcely keep their feet. For a long time the ball was kept goin' up and down the field; but just as one side had almost got it into goal the other team would drive them back by main force. The sides were well matched, even after the Bloaters had lost a man, for the black gipsy was looked upon as good as two men any day. He was always in the rough of the fight, and when it came to givin' and takin' hard knocks he always had his share of them. Once he broke away from three men who tried to hold him, slingin' them off him as if they had been so many dolls, and he scored more notches than any other man who played in the match. All round the field you could hear cries of "Go it, Black Jake!" or "Look out for the Black Gipsy!" and so quick was he in gettin' the ball that three men were told off to mark him wherever he went and do their best to cripple him. It was through him that the Bloaters scored two more notches, and when a man tripped him so that he strained his leg and could hardly hobble about the field, the Yarmouth side played as though they knew they had lost the day.

'At the end of an hour and a half's play the scores were equal, for each side had six notches. There was no time fixed for the game to finish, and although many of the men who were watchin' the match had several miles to walk to their homes, not one of them left the field. By this time most of the players were just about "done-up," and the faces, arms and bodies of some of them were smeared with blood. You might have thought they had been takin' part in a great ring-fight. When the young squire threw up the ball for the last time, the crowd had become so excited that they could scarcely keep off the playin' ground, and all round the field there were scuffles and fights goin' on between men who had quarrelled over the game. Black Jake had givin' up joinin' in the rough of the game, and was hangin' about round goal, layin' wait for the Walshamers who came his way; so the Bloaters had only ten men out in the field, while the other side still numbered their full strength.

'As the winnin' of the game depended on the scorin' of the next notch, every player took good care not to be held while he had the ball, which was kept goin' from one man to another. Twice it was carried right up to the Walsham goal, and once the Bloaters claimed that they had got it through; but the judges said it had not crossed the line, and the game went on. It began to grow dark, so that the crowd could not see clearly all that went

on in the field; but at last, after a long spell of fast play had brought the ball close to the Walsham goal, the little Reedham man who had scored the first notch was seen to slip out of a ruck of players and make for the Bloaters' goal. Two of the fastest of the Yarmouth players were after him, and one of them caught him by the arm, twisting it out of joint at the shoulder, but he wrenched himself free and, like a good plucked 'un, stuck to the ball and kept on runnin'. The two Bloaters followed close at his heels, and behind them were three Walshamers, who were peltin' down the field as hard as they could go to back up the plucky little player. He outran the two Bloaters, but there was still Black Jake waiting for him close to goal, and he knew that if Jake got at him it would be all up with him. The gipsy watched him coming, and, though he could scarcely limp, got ready to spring upon him. The little chap was within six yards of goal when Jake caught him round the neck, snatched the ball from him, and flung him out of the ground. That was where the black gipsy made a mistake. If he had held the man with the ball his side would have won the game; but he tore the ball away from him, and before he himself could throw it to another Bloater the three Walshamers were upon him. They flung themselves at him like so many wolves and hurled him to the ground. "Held! held!" they yelled, and the people who were ravin' around the goal yelled "Held!" too. Then the crowd swarmed over the field, for many of them could not see who was held, and some of them thought Black Jake had held the little runner. But when they saw the little man being raised on other Walshamers' shoulders, and Black Jake being carried away half dead, they knew that the Walsham men had won.'

Such was the old gunner's account of the last camping match played in the Eastern Counties. Before we left he told us something about 'kicking camp' and 'savage camp,' the latter of which was a game in which the players wore heavy shoes: but of these he spoke from hearsay, and I will not tell of them here.

THE SUBALTERN IN INDIA

BY COLONEL T. S. ST. CLAIR

YOUTH—gay, light-hearted youth, full of life and energy, and capable of filling the healthy cup of enjoyment to the brim—how little do you value the passing hour as it should be valued, and how often do you carelessly waste on matters frivolous the golden opportunities now so largely your own! This is a theme that might be debated in many ways. I propose to consider it only in reference to one, and that is with regard to sport, or the fulfilment of that most powerful instinct or craving of our animal nature which we share equally with the whole animated creation as a necessity of our common existence. For what is sport in its primary significance? Is it not the taking or killing of wild creatures for food, together with the destruction of harmful creatures? And in so acting, are we not carrying out our compulsory lawful destiny? Hence youth from the earliest years should be sporting, graduating through the successive phases of this individual trait of character that goes so far to make the man. But with sport, as in other matters, opportunity exercises a paramount influence, for the sporting instinct is generally implanted in every British lad, dormant perhaps for the time, but only requiring the suitable occasion to burst forth and convert him into an ardent, energetic sportsman. And the ladies, too! God bless them! In these days of sexual equality, are they less sporting than the youths? Most certainly not. Not only do they take a forward share in every sport and game open to them, in some instances vying with the men, but in moments of thrilling danger or of extreme trial, such as a catastrophe by sea or an

Indian Mutiny, how often have they not set an example of noble fortitude and of self-control that has made us indeed proud of them? But it is in the smaller self-sacrifices of ordinary every-day life that female heroism is so often displayed. Depend upon it, our prestige amongst the nations of the world will never diminish so long as our wives and daughters maintain their present high standard of devotion to duty and honour, and their participation in sport and in healthy open-air exercises.

It is surprising how India develops sporting instincts. A battalion lands in the country, a proportion of the Subalterns of which may never have either shot or hunted at home, but no sooner does the opportunity occur than it is seized, and then is found the advantage of a public-school training—those bodily exercises whereby the hand and eye have been taught to work together, and pluck and endurance have been stimulated.

When quartered in Deesa it was always an object of ambition to our sporting Subalterns to bag an Indian lion, of which, although not plentiful, some were always to be found in the desert of Sirohi, towards the Western Runn of Kutch. I have known a stray animal shot within twenty miles of Deesa, a three-quarter-grown cub; but I never met one myself, nor did I ever go specially after lions, because I always believed a much better variety of game was to be found in the jungle than in the desert country, whilst the influence of my shikari always tended towards the locality he best knew, and where he had more confidence of sport. One of our Subalterns, however—let me call him B.—did make a special expedition after lions, and, as these animals are not common even in the restricted locality they frequent, it may be of interest if I recount his experiences. B. was an excellent shot, and as hard as a nail. He travelled lightly, and rather prided himself on roughing it. The first lions he encountered consisted of a family of four, the male and female with two almost full-grown cubs. They were in a sandy desert, about which was a quantity of thick scrub-bush, not continuous, but growing in patches, and in this the lions took refuge. An attempt with a few beaters was made to drive the animals towards the gun, but they refused to face the open, only one cub offering a shot and being killed. It was carried towards the camping-ground, and a short distance from it was skinned, the skin and the skull being lodged at night for security in the tree under which B. had placed his charpoy (native bedstead). He had no tent, and lived in a very primitive fashion in the open, a big fire close to being lighted at night and a watchman being on duty beside it. About mid-

night this man awoke the sahib by touching his shoulder, and said quietly, 'Sher hai, sahib' ('There is a lion, sir'). B. jumped from the bed and, seizing his rifle, said: 'Where is it?' 'Deckho, sahib' ('Look, sir') was the whispered reply, and the watchman pointed out into the darkness. At first B. could distinguish nothing, but he could hear a low moaning sound, and when his eyes became more accustomed to the want of light he made out the lioness crouched on the ground some sixty yards away, her head between her fore-paws, and her eyes gleaming in reflection from the fire, as she occasionally gave vent to the quiet, plaintive moans he had heard. She had evidently followed the track of her cub to the spot where it had been skinned, and was now bewailing its fate and perhaps meditating revenge. B. quickly put the fire between himself and the animal. After a time the lioness got up and moved round to the other side, where she again laid down in the same position, and continued to moan at intervals. Needless to say that as she moved, B. did so also; and for the remainder of the night he was engaged dodging the animal round the fire. She never came nearer than about sixty yards, at which distance she could doubtless see distinctly everything near the fire without being herself plainly visible. At the first streak of dawn she left. She was evidently most concerned about the loss of her cub, which she realised had been killed; but had it been captured alive, or even had it been placed near the tree unskinned, she would undoubtedly have come to closer quarters.

That day B. bagged both the lion and its mate. I believe there was no particular difficulty about it. The animals were pugged up and were found in the scrub cover, where they were shot. B. told me that he never witnessed a grander sight than the male animal on the ground. Indian lions are reputed to be deficient in pluck, and to generally attempt to escape even when wounded. The first shot broke the back-bone and paralysed the hind-quarters. The lion, unable to charge, raised itself up with its hind-legs doubled under it, and pawed the air with its fore-legs as it uttered loud roars that testified to the angry disappointment it felt at not being able to reach its adversary. Of course B. at once shot it dead. I saw the skin subsequently. The mane was small, but I was surprised at the size of the claws, so much larger than a tiger's. The skull also was larger, with bigger teeth. If I remember rightly, the measurements of the body were also in excess of those of an ordinary tiger, but I have no record of them.

B. was one of those hardy sportsmen who believe in taking as little as possible into the jungle, and who prefer to live almost entirely upon local supplies, as a native shikari would do. His early death from internal complications was, I believe, greatly due to roughing it in this manner. I never thought this game was worth the candle. The heat is always extreme and the work very hard, whilst in my opinion health is the first consideration, long before success in sport. To allow the system to run down by taking an immense deal out of it, whilst refraining from those ordinary European luxuries that are always in India considered necessities, does not assist sport, nor do I think it is a cause of satisfaction in after-years when the result of want of care in youth is apt to become painfully apparent, causing when too late many unavailing regrets. But B. was an admirable sportsman, and a very cool, collected shot at big game. He had many stirring adventures. Let me relate one of them. On one occasion he had severely wounded a tiger that had taken refuge in a long, rambling sort of covered place under rocks and roots of trees, from which it refused to be evicted. The shikari tried rockets, smoke-balls and also smoking with fires of damp leaves, firing guns, tom-toms, and the usual accompaniment of yells and noises from the beaters. Nothing seemed of use, and B. was about to give up further attempts to bolt the animal when an under-shikari—a quiet, observant man, who talked little, but whose advice was always shrewd and to the point—came up to say that the tiger was stretched out under an opening to the cave where it could obtain fresh air, but where it could not be shot. He had taken a cast round by himself to examine various crevices in the ramifications of this underground retreat, and he had seen one paw extended, the whole of the body being concealed by the rocks. B. went to the spot, and found a sort of wide shaft some fifteen feet deep and nearly the same distance across. At the bottom just the tip of the tiger's paw was visible. A quiet consultation was held some distance away. The rocks were precipitous and could not be easily climbed down, whilst the position of a sportsman in the act of descending would certainly not be conducive to correct shooting in case of a charge. Much against the advice of his shikari, B determined to have himself lowered until he could see the animal sufficiently to be able to kill it. It was a terrible risk, but he had confidence in his own nerve and in his own shooting powers, his only fear being that the tiger would not wait to face him, but would retire into the further depths of its subterranean retreat. He gave instructions

THE LION, UNABLE TO CHARGE, PAWED THE AIR WITH ITS FORE-LEGS AS IT UTTERED LOUD ROARS

for the beaters to continue both their noises and the fires at the other openings to the cave, and then directing his men to remove their pugarees and cummerbunds, he knotted them together, making loops for his legs and arms. A piece of rope that his shikari produced helped to bear his weight. When all was ready he took his position in the sling he had manufactured, rifle in hand, and quietly slipt down over the rock from his seat on the edge, his men lowering him gently. He at once covered the entrance to the cave with his rifle, in readiness for a charge, keeping his eye on the tiger's paw, the movement of which he felt sure would precede the movement of the body. As more and more of the animal became visible, he began to feel himself more secure. The tiger at once began to growl, and he could hear its tail switching from side to side as if it meant business, and he momentarily expected to see the animal bound out like a flash of lightning; but in a few seconds he was lowered sufficiently to see the junction of the head and neck, and before it made up its mind to charge he had closed its career by a shot that entered the skull. The ordinary reader may be inclined to exclaim, 'What a foolhardy thing to do! He well deserved to have been mauled!' I will not gainsay this opinion, and yet I never heard of a more plucky action. It is pluck of this sort that impresses natives and helps to maintain our prestige in the East, and B.'s absolute disregard of fear is no doubt now one of the stock stories of the district. Had the tiger been of a more pugnacious nature, B. would probably have suffered; and yet he was a wonderfully cool shot, and I consequently am inclined to believe that the odds would certainly have been on the gun in case of a charge. It is probable that the apparent pusillanimity of the animal was caused by either the stiffening or the severity of the first wound.

As rather a contrast to B. let me relate the experiences of another Subaltern, who was no sportsman, and who, I believe, had never fired a shot or crossed a horse before coming to India. He had been brought up at a school in France, and knew more about absinthe and La Vie Parisienne than he did of sport. However, a good example works wonders, and, fired with the ambition to emulate his neighbours, he decided upon taking a fortnight's leave *pour le sport*. When he returned he was full of excitement at the grand shikar he had enjoyed. He was not quite sure what the game had been, but the birds were numerous and his success had been great. He was of an economical turn of mind, and had not taken with him many European stores; but there really had

been no necessity for them, he proudly informed us, because he had lived for the fortnight upon the proceeds of his gun. I have no doubt that marvellous accounts were written home. But, alas for human greatness!—or, rather, for his local reputation—he one day took a ride in company, and in a weak moment pointed out specimens of his game. It was with a conscious air of superior knowledge that he drew attention to the large whitish birds about the size of a raven, with dirty-brown wing-feathers, that hovered near or swept down to seize any morsel that they considered edible. 'Was that the game you ate?' asked his companion. 'Yes, and very good they were,' was the reply. 'Great Scott! I always thought a Mossoo would cook and eat anything!' exclaimed his companion. 'Why, man, don't you know those are Egyptian vultures?' he continued. 'They are regular scavengers and devour offal, and—worse than offal—all the vile, detestable, evil-smelling refuse round the native villages. You will be lucky if you escape typhoid or some other horrible disease.' I never heard that this Subaltern went again out shooting, or if he did he was judicious enough to keep to himself the result of his shikar; and, strange to say, he was none the worse for the consumption of so much carrion!

One of the greatest temptations to young officers when they first go to India is the inclination to misjudge the natives, and to fancy that because they do not understand the wishes conveyed by most feeble attempts at the vernacular, or because they do not sometimes act as promptly as may be desired, therefore they must necessarily be fools or idiots, or must be wilfully and designedly obstructive; and that, in any case, a little physical stimulation will quicken their comprehension and expedite their movements. It is a very great mistake. The ordinary native is usually afraid of the newly-arrived Subaltern, whose ludicrous attempts at Hindustani convey so little meaning to his mind, and he misinterprets for anger the loud and apparently very excited exclamations of the Sahib, who generally carries a stick that evidently in his (the native's) opinion can only be required for one purpose. Thus Saxon energy clashes with Eastern apathy, and often terminates in an ebullition of undignified wrath on the one side and in a hasty impromptu exit on the other side. It is no doubt very annoying not to be understood, however loudly one may speak, whilst it is certainly most irritating to be delayed by the apparent 'cussedness' of one's man. I well recollect a case in point. The acting secretary of our Hunt, a Subaltern full of energy and impulse, could speak little of the language. However,

woe betide the unlucky native who failed to carry out his orders. He made him hop round pretty smartly, to a tune not of his own selection. On this occasion we were about to beat a large bere of

HE CLOSED ITS CAREER BY A SHOT THAT ENTERED THE SKULL

grass. The secretary gave his instructions, but the headman of the village in charge of the beaters, who had probably assisted at or directed the operation a hundred times before, and who knew

exactly how the pig would break, varied these instructions in some way, not attaching to their implicit compliance, even if he thoroughly understood them, the same importance that the secretary evidently did. The latter almost immediately discovered the change in the programme, and saying with considerable annoyance that 'it was impossible to trust one of these confounded natives,' he put spurs to his horse and rode straight for the Kutwal, calling him a soor (pig) and other encouraging epithets. The headman, seeing an angry, excited Sahib, spear in hand, charging directly upon him, naturally turned and fled. This only served to increase our secretary's outraged feelings, who now regarded the man as a coward, and as he came up with him he reversed his spear with the object of striking the runaway between the shoulders; but the blow caused the man to fall, and the butt slipped forward and grazed his head, cutting the skin and drawing blood. To make peace with the Kotwal he was given a present of a few rupees, but this by no means satisfied him, and three days afterwards he presented himself before the General commanding, to complain of the treatment he had experienced, his head being covered with thick dry gore and the wound having been purposely left untouched. Although the distance was about eighteen miles, he was accompanied by a strong detachment from his village, prepared to give evidence in support of a pecuniary claim; and no doubt they all thought they saw their way to a nice round sum, and had probably arranged in advance amongst themselves how it was to be divided. The General held an inquiry at his bungalow, and called in a surgeon to examine the wound. When the head was washed, the cut was found to be small and superficial, and to have been perfectly incapable of causing so much blood. Undoubtedly the case had been well got up, additional blood producing the effect of a terrible wound; but the villagers were so taken aback by the result of the washing and the exposure of their scheme, that an extra rupee or two settled the matter. Since those days the assault of a native has been made punishable by law, and a Sahib can now be summoned and fined. There is an excellent story, when first this law became operative, of a rather diminutive master and an unusually big bearer. The latter had given some cause of offence, for which the former determined to inflict corporal punishment, but, in order to avoid inconvenient witnesses, he first locked the door of his bungalow. 'Now, you brute,' said the Sahib, 'no one is looking, and I shall give you a thrashing.' 'Is master sure no one is looking?' asked the bearer. 'Yes, you soor,' was the reply.

'Then I thrash master,' said the man; and he did it too, according to the accepted report.

One of the greatest institutions at an up-country station is undoubtedly the Hunt Club. It gives, Subalterns especially, capital sport for a very limited outlay, and encourages them to take a healthy sporting interest in horses and in riding. It promotes sociability, for the members are drawn from every rank and from every branch of civil and military life, whilst there is sufficient rivalry to create intense keenness, amounting almost to jealousy. Of course experienced riders and the best horses win the greatest number of spears; but much fun and sport can be had, if of a light weight, with a very moderate steed, and an occasional 'first spear' taken by good luck even when badly mounted. The race is not always to the swift. At Deesa, when I was secretary to the Hunt, many years ago, the field never consisted of more than seven or eight horsemen, excepting on unusual occasions. We used the Bombay or long spear, the steel head mounted on a male bamboo of such a length that when on horseback the hand could nearly reach to the top, the butt being on the ground. The boar is speared merely by the weight and impetus of the horse, without any effort on the part of the rider beyond the direction of the spear. In case of a charge there is in addition the weight and impetus of the pig to assist, but in spite of so much conflicting momentum I have frequently seen a blunt point fail to penetrate, the moral of which is that spear-heads should always be kept sharp and free from rust. After the delivery of the thrust the wrist is turned over, the horse, which has been turned from the boar, withdrawing the spear. Occasionally, when the penetration has been between the ribs or contiguous to a large bone, there is a difficulty of withdrawal, and a badly-shaped head augments this difficulty. The spear must then necessarily be let go, and the horseman has subsequently to manœuvre to recapture it. I have known a hard-fighting, resolute boar to be in unhappy possession of three such temporarily derelict spears. The golden rule is never to receive a charge at a standstill. The faster your horse is moving at the moment of impact, the better your chance of successfully spearing and the less chance of being ripped. Once let a boar in under your horse, and with a quiet upward turn of the head that is hardly appreciable to the novice, so innocent does it appear, he inflicts a horrible gash with his razor-like tusk, that cuts like a lancet, and you are lucky if your favourite horse again carries you —at least, for some months. When not actually in use, the spear is

carried in the right hand across the body, an easy position except when passing amongst trees. On one occasion I was nearly swept from the saddle when in close pursuit of a boar. The animal dodged through a grove. I followed, forgetting that my spear was across my body, until suddenly brought up by finding myself on the crupper and by hearing the crack of the splintered bamboo. I left that boar to his own devices, thankful for the escape and for the experience gained. It was always a wonder to me that more accidents with a spear do not occur, especially amongst Griffs, who perhaps are in some instances not perfectly at home with their steeds. I have heard of a spear-point catching in the ground, the spear being twisted out of the rider's hand, and the pace causing it to reverse, so that the butt strikes the ground and presents the point to the advancing horseman. I have been told of a horse thus penetrated from chest to tail. I have also heard of a rider thus run through. At tent-pegging an eye-witness tells me he saw a similar occurrence in consequence of one rider following another too closely. The former was riding an excited, ungovernable beast of a horse. The latter's spear reversed and stuck with the butt point in the ground. The head was slowing sinking downwards when the former, his attention on his horse and thinking the coast was clear, started and was upon the spear in a moment without seeing it. A groan went through the assembled crowd of natives. The spear pierced the thigh, and the officer just managed to check his horse and then fell from loss of blood. But such accidents out pig-sticking are scarce and far between. I have known several very valuable horses killed out hunting, either ripped or damaged fencing. Small blind nullahs filled with loose débris are especially dangerous. The rider's eyes are generally on the boar, and he is obliged to leave a good deal to his horse. A false step into such a trap generally results in a heavy fall on account of the pace, with a broken limb to either rider or steed. I once saw a heavy gunner, who weighed over fifteen stone, take 'first spear' in a way he will always remember. So eager was he that he looked only at the boar, and just as his spear took effect his horse stumbled and shot the rider over its head into a large prickly-pear bush with thorns 1½ inch long. We had considerable difficulty in extricating him!

A boar hunt has been so often described that a detailed repetition would be tedious. From Deesa we had to go some distance to get sport. It was mainly a question of cover, and at the time I speak of a succession of droughts had destroyed much

of the neighbouring jungle, and had considerably affected the growing of grain, sugar-cane, and other succulent crops that pig delight in. Opium seemed to be the principal commodity culti-

IN UNHAPPY POSSESSION OF THREE DERELICT SPEARS

vated near the station. We made an early start, having usually to ride some ten to eighteen miles to the meet, on camels or on tatoos, as the small ponies are called. The horses had been sent on over-night, and an abundant meal awaited our arrival. There

was always a certain amount of fencing, some of the large built-up fences that surrounded the fields being no trifle to negotiate, and the ground being especially treacherous. There is considerable excitement in the race for 'first spear.' The pace of a boar is surprising. The long distances travelled nightly for food serve to keep him in excellent condition. For a couple of miles and more he has the legs of the speediest horse. Many a time have I raced behind such an animal, my spear-point being only a few yards from his stern. His vicious, cunning eyes take in everything behind him, and he goes well within himself, just keeping his distance. Try to dash forward, and he detects you at once. No sooner do your spurs go in than he also increases his pace, without apparent effort, and maintains his distance ahead. A steep nullah down which he disappears, a built-up fence through which he rushes, a stretch of cover or very broken ground, all offer opportunities of which he is not slow to avail himself, and once lose him and the chances of again finding and of killing him are very remote. But when he commences to tire, and the ground is open, then comes the crucial time. Each rider seizes his opportunity to attempt a rush, but the gallant boar is his match. By either quickening his pace or else by a turn he saves his bacon, and perhaps induces a second horseman to try his luck. A twist to the right or left offers a chance to a third to obtain the spear, and so the rival attempts succeed each other until length of stride begins to tell, and the outpaced animal at last fails to elude a sudden rush and receives the spear—driven well home, I trust, for nothing is so griffin-like as the simple pricking of a boar when a deadly thrust should have been delivered. And then the gallant animal stands at bay, his hind-quarters in a bush, and each rider has to attack him in turn, receiving his charge on his spear's point. It is exciting work, and grand training for after-life. No more plucky creature exists than the wild boar. He fears nothing, not even a tiger, and he will fight determinedly to the bitter end. To the very last gasp he is resolute and firm. There is no shirking or turning tail, but out he comes to do or to die, like the stern warrior he is, and he earns again and again the warmest admiration of his assailants. He is indeed a noble foe, as relentless as he is courageous; and it is this that makes his pursuit so grand a sport, and that causes his memory to quicken the pulse and to glisten the eye as the mind recalls the many occasions on which the old grey boar, the mighty boar, has occupied so conspicuous and so prominent a position.

A well-known and excellent sportsman, the late Colonel A. R.

Heyland, 1st Bombay Lancers, if I may venture to mention him by name, who was shot down by a native soldier at Deesa, once told me the following experience as we were riding back to that station on the same camel, he sitting in front and driving. He said that on one occasion when he was pig-sticking with only another sportsman a large heavy boar had been severely speared and had taken refuge in a fair-sized piece of cover, out of which he could not be driven or induced to charge. It was dangerous to send the beaters too near him, and, although the horsemen rode round and penetrated as far as was possible, no efforts on their part inveigled the cunning animal to show himself. At last they decided that as they could not possibly leave him where he was, a menace and a danger to the neighbourhood, it was their duty to finish him off on foot. Accordingly they dismounted, and selecting new and sharp spears they proceeded shoulder-to-shoulder to enter the cover, arranging that in case of a charge they should assume the 'prepare for cavalry' position, resting the butts on the ground. Sure enough, very shortly out he came with a vicious grunt! grunt! his brilliant, determined-looking eyes showing their whites and being full of mischief, whilst his bristles were standing on end. He went straight for them. At once they dropped to the orthodox position, lowering the points of their spears to the height of his chest. There was a tremendous concussion and splintering of bamboos. Both sportsmen were tumbled over into the bushes behind, and voluntarily gave another roll or two to avoid being ripped; and when they picked themselves up they found the spears had gone home, the heart being penetrated and the gallant boar being dead. I repeat this story entirely from memory, but I believe no essential point is omitted. I wish I could recollect the many other sporting anecdotes told me by this distinguished soldier and capital sportsman, whose untimely loss was so greatly deplored, and whose name I hope I am not doing wrong in introducing into the pages of our leading sporting magazine.

I have already drawn a contrast between Subalterns as shots. Let me now do so in the hunting-field by relating a curious episode with an unforeseen result that occurred amongst us youngsters. It so happened that on this occasion no senior officers were out. We had assembled at the meet, some five or six members, as keen as mustard, as well as our Egyptian vulture friend, who rode an old grey mare, but who refused to carry a spear. The beaters had to work through a large grass bere. We heard their increased energy as soon as game was on foot, but

nothing broke cover, and on the conclusion of the beat they informed us that a panther had been seen, but that the animal had gone back through the line. Here was a chance not to be lost. As soon as we heard the welcome news, we unanimously decided to attempt to ride the panther, and directed the beaters to work again straight back, slowly and carefully, keeping a straight line and maintaining the utmost noise. We promised them a special reward if they were successful in forcing the animal out. Directly the Subaltern in question heard these instructions he declared that nothing would induce him to remain, that he was not going to endanger his life, and that he would return forthwith to camp. Accordingly he whipped up his old grey—I don't think he wore spurs—and he never drew bridle until he reached the tent three miles away, and there he remained for the rest of the day, and there we found him on our return. Now, although every man is undoubtedly entitled to decide for himself what amount of sporting risk he will run, and to decline to be present at an attempt to beat out a panther, we had a feeling that as he had chosen to come out he should have accepted the consequences, and that it was not exactly the proper thing to have done, to gallop straight away in front of the beaters. Accordingly, without any ulterior motives, we sent him a request, signed by us all, that unless he could conduct himself properly as a sportsman we should be better pleased if he would refrain from coming again to the hunt. This reached the ears of the authorities, and a sort of inquiry was held by the Colonel in his bungalow, with the result that an adverse opinion on the Subaltern's behaviour was expressed, followed shortly afterwards by the notification of an exchange in the *Gazette*. I have always thought it a very hard case and one that exemplifies the wrong done to a boy by neglecting to accustom him to sport and to imbue him with those proclivities that usually stamp the right description of British lad. But such cases are rare, and, given time and opportunities, I feel sure that even our Egyptian vulture Subaltern might have been converted into a passable sportsman. He well serves to demonstrate the truth of the sententious aphorism with which I commenced—that youth often wastes on frivolities sporting chances which, if properly utilised, would assist to form character and to train for the subsequent battle of life.

NOTES

BY 'RAPIER'

I AM inclined, if it may be excused, to make a humble little note of the fact that my belief as to Flying Fox's Derby success, and likewise as to what would happen to Gentle Ida in the Paris Steeplechase, both proved to be correct. Some weeks before the Derby a note was published here, in which it was remarked: 'I may briefly say that if all goes well with Flying Fox and he is not recorded as a Derby winner when these lines are read, one of the greatest upsets in the history of the great race will have occurred. He looks like joining the band of famous horses whose winnings have to be reckoned in tens of thousands.' So much for Flying Fox, though John Porter ridicules the idea that he is 'a second Ormonde.' Of the Auteuil Steeplechase, with reference to Gentle Ida I also wrote: 'My own impression is that she is far more likely to fall than stand up, and that if she does not come down she will get so much abroad at some of the jumps that she is tolerably certain to be beaten.' Of course I have read Sloan's declaration that he would certainly have won the Derby had not Holocauste broken down. I am also acquainted with Mornington Cannon's opinion that Flying Fox would inevitably have won, whatever happened to Holocauste. Of the two opinions I should in any case have had far greater confidence in that of the English jockey. But in addition to this I chanced to see the race. I know that Holocauste was in front just precisely as long as he could stay there, that he was at full stretch when Flying Fox was going easily within himself, and that when the

Duke of Westminster's colt took up the running it was because Holocauste was beaten. With regard to Gentle Ida, she got abroad to begin with and fell afterwards.

It would, of course, be a most excellent thing if there were no delays at the starts of races, and if all the horses invariably jumped off on even terms; and if these conditions could be secured by the introduction of any of the starting machines, the two facts would go a long distance to outweigh other objections to this contrivance. As a matter of fact good starts are not by any manner of means assured. A sportsman who has seen much of the machine tells me that he thinks there are about four good starts out of six, and he reckons that, on an average, better than we make with our system. I am not by any means sure that we do not do considerably better than this. If all those who are accustomed to the machine were in its favour, that would also be an argument for the adoption; but they are not. My other objections are based on the fact that the contrivance must inevitably be dangerous, for the reason that when horses are closely wedged up together in a line, a vicious or excitable animal is perfectly certain to launch out with his heels, and disaster is exceedingly likely to follow; while there is another very possible source of risk in the fact that some horses are tolerably sure to charge into the gate when it is down. I well remember Webb looking at one of the machines at Newmarket and saying, 'But what would be likely to happen if old Woolsthorpe were the other side of that?'

Very many owners and trainers (and my great point is that as owners are the people chiefly concerned their wishes ought to be first of all considered) most strongly object to having their horses taught tricks in conjunction with mechanical contrivances, and jumping off from the starting gate is a trick, which it appears some horses learn quickly, others learn slowly, and a considerable minority can never be induced to learn at all—one cause of the many bad starts which follow being thus explained. Those of us who are acquainted with the French Turf are aware of the fact that delays at the post are exceedingly rare in that country; but this may in a great measure be accounted for by the circumstance

that the five, and six, furlong races which are so plentiful in England are rarely found in French programmes. It is absurd to suppose that any one who goes racing does not frequently grow wearied, and sometimes exasperated, when long delays at the post occur. Waiting is tedious; besides, there is the additional fact that an animal in which one is interested may exhaust himself by continually breaking away, and may have his temper very severely ruffled, to say nothing of the chance of incurring physical injury, by being constantly pulled up. If there were not very solid objections to the gate, it is absurd to suppose that everybody would not cordially welcome its employment.

The two-year-old running at Ascot has been particularly disappointing, for it was hoped and expected that something really good would appear, and this has not been the case—unless, indeed, Mr. Low's Elopement turn out a good horse. It may chance that the best animals are entered in two-year-old races other than the Coventry and New Stakes—Elopement won the Windsor Castle—but it is to those two that one chiefly looks for young horses that are afterwards to make great names for themselves. Winners of these two events reappear in the lists of those that have carried off the Middle Park Plate, the Dewhurst, and subsequently the Derby, Leger, and great events of following years. This is chiefly the case with the New Stakes, for in the short table of winners of the Coventry some moderate animals are found, though temper or unsoundness doubtless accounts for their deterioration. Without going into elaborate details of the running, it may be briefly said that there is little reason to believe that we saw any good two-year-olds out at Ascot—I may be over-rating Mr. Low's colt—where it had been fondly anticipated that the character of the young horses would be redeemed and elevated. The reason why one thinks poorly of the winners is that they were, as a rule, hard pressed by animals that had run previously and had shown themselves to be moderate. One horse that set the seal to his reputation was Cyllene, whose victory in the Gold Cup was certainly of the most brilliant character. S. Loates, who rode him, declared that he went as fast at the finish as at the start, and that he was just as ready to run on when the winning post was reached, after that desperately tiring two and a half mile journey, as he had been when the flag fell. I was scarcely prepared to see such a striking exhibition of superiority, for I

find it a good rule never to believe that a horse can stay the counter course until one has seen him do it. Cyllene, however, unquestionably has speed and stamina, and can only be set down as a really first-class horse.

The style in which Eager carried off the Wokingham Stakes also merits a word of admiration, for 9 st. 7 lb. is a great weight, and he literally made light of it. I suppose he is the best five-year-old in training, though one does not claim quite first-class rank for an animal that cannot 'get' more than a mile. Kilcock I take to be still the best six-year-old, but the same somewhat deprecatory comment attaches to him. A mile is just beyond his distance. Cyllene is doubtless the best four-year-old, and Flying Fox the best three. He did not run at Ascot; of those who did, I should place Lord Edward II. (like Eager, by the way, a son of Enthusiast) well in front of Caiman. Elopement, I fancy, is the best two-year-old we have seen so far, but better will doubtless come presently.

Few people realise what a great deal of polo is now played at various places in England, and to what an extent the game is becoming popular. Hurlingham and Ranelagh, during the season, are of course busy, but I have been surprised on inquiry to find how polo thrives in other places, considering the expenses attending it, the necessity for considerable practice, and the fact that appropriate grounds are not everywhere to be found. Spectators seem to take not only a keen, but a critical, interest in matches, and one hears but very little of the rubbish that is talked by men as well as by women at ordinary race meetings. There was such a throng at Hurlingham on the 10th of last month, when the final tie for the Inter-Regimental Cup was contested by the 7th and 13th Hussars, that one might have supposed nearly all who took an interest in the game must have been present; but there was also on the same afternoon an enormous crowd to witness the games at Ranelagh. Play for the Cup grew desperately exciting towards the finish, for when each side had scored one goal (and the first was obtained before the game was a minute old) attack and defence were so equal that not another score was made until just two minutes from the finish, when the 7th Hussars wound up by hitting a goal, all the more

to the credit of Major Poore, because he had been suffering severely from a strained arm. I hope I am wrong in the idea that foul play is becoming not quite so rare as it used to be, but the subject is worth the attention of club committees and umpires. Not a few players and lovers of the game are of opinion that instead of a shot at goal when a foul has been declared, a goal should be scored for the aggrieved side.

'Kent *v.* England, 1746,' has hitherto held the same place in the history of cricket as 'William the Conqueror, 1066,' held in that of England until it was discovered that the 'Saxons' had some claim to the consideration of historians. The authority given for this date has always been the 'Gentleman's Magazine;' but Mr. Ashley Cooper, writing in 'Cricket,' not only avers that he can find no record of the match in the volume for that year, but also that in the volume for 1744 is an announcement of Love's poem, written in its celebration. As Love was only a modern poet, and not an ancient seer, he could hardly have described the match two years before it was played. Moreover, 'any schoolboy' should have known that the Duke of Cumberland ('Butcher'), who is said to have been among the spectators, was carving his unenviable sobriquet among the Highlands in the year following the '45. Fortunately, Mr. Cooper was not satisfied with destructive criticism, but continued his researches until he found a report and score of the match in the 'London Magazine' for 1744, which supplies also the date, hitherto missing, as Monday, June 18, which is now memorable for two signal struggles for victory. The correction may not be of much importance, but is at least as valuable as much of the textual criticism applied to other branches of historical literature.

Is cricket increasing in popularity? It would really seem that it is so. Eagerly as the racing was followed at Ascot, one feature of the meeting was the receipt of telegrams from Lord's, giving details of the progress of the match between England and the Australians, and there seemed just as much anxiety to follow the progress of that contest as to know what was likely to win the next race. A feeling of melancholy set in when it was known that six England wickets were down for sixty-six, and things

brightened up considerably when further news came that Jackson and Jessop were making a stand. The general opinion seems to be that this team of Australians is at least as good as any that has previously come to England. The early players made a deep mark because they were strange, and a feeling had existed that after all English cricketers were sure to beat the Colonials. The performances of Spofforth, Blackham, and others were therefore, if not magnified, at any rate estimated at quite their full value; but now so much is expected of players who come from the Colonies, that they will do great things, and they have to do them in order to fulfil expectation. The present Australian eleven are at any rate fully maintaining the high character of Antipodean cricket.

THE
BADMINTON MAGAZINE
August 1899

AUDHUMLA

BY L. H. DE VISME SHAW

AT Cambridge, to my stupendous amazement, I came out Senior Wrangler. I have been astonished at many things during my life, but never so absolutely astounded as when the news of my success reached me—indeed, were I to say that I was struck dumb with bewilderment, it would convey quite an inadequate impression of my physical and mental state at the time. Even now, I am constantly haunted by the conviction that there was some awful mistake, some mixing up of names and papers or something, and that I had forced upon me the honours due to another—a poor unfortunate wretch, the true Wrangler, who may perhaps at the present time be dragging out a deathly life in the workhouse, while my career has prospered and is still prospering on the fruit of his brains.

However, Senior Wrangler they declared me to be, and I bowed to the decision with the best grace I could. My reason for dwelling upon all this is, that if the mistake, or whatever it was, had not occurred, it would never have been my lot to play the part I did in the somewhat tragic event I am about to describe.

My uncle, whose heir I was, wrote me a long letter of congratulation the same day that the news reached him. It was my uncle's wish that I should eventually enter Parliament. His

wishes never failed to ensure my full compliance; he was my only relative, and I had not a penny of my own.

About a week afterwards I received another letter from my uncle; it was written on the note-paper of his club, the United Service.

'I got back from the Continent yesterday,' he wrote, 'and should like to see you as soon as possible. Last night I was talking to an old acquaintance, General Hardwick-Giles, who wants a tip-top University man as tutor to his only son. He is already in correspondence with two or three M.A.'s, but does not seem to consider any of them good enough. It occurred to me that perhaps you might be inclined to undertake the post. He jumped at the idea of having a Senior Wrangler. I really think it would be an excellent thing for you just at present—say for a year or so. The tuition of a single boy would not materially interfere with your reading, and you would be paying your own way. The General offers 250*l*. You would live in the house, Pimento Park, down in Sussex. He tells me that you would have capital hunting and shooting. Don't you think it would be better, at all events for a time, than knocking about in town?'

I did think so. At the beginning of the following quarter I found myself installed at Pimento Park, the country seat of General the Honourable George Bowyer Hardwick-Giles, C.B., where I stayed for just two years. And a rare good time I had altogether. A few dull spells there were, it was true, but then dull spells are certain to crop up every now and again wherever your lot may happen to be cast. I had the run of a capital trout stream, I hunted twice a week right through the season, and I got in for all the best shooting within miles of the place. What more could one want?

The General's long period of service in India had won him both fame and a liver. Liver was the mainspring of all his actions—or nearly all of them. It brought him out of bed at unearthly hours in the morning to ride madly for mile after mile through every variety of weather; it kept him incessantly on the move from breakfast till luncheon, and again from luncheon till dinner. During the evening, when not playing billiards with either myself or the footman (billiard playing was one of the footman's regular duties), he would wander continuously up and down the room. How he passed his nights I do not know. The General's irritability—chronic and extreme—was a thing to marvel at; his fits of rage were, to say the least of them, awe-

inspiring; his language, while the fits lasted, might almost be described as sufficiently vivid to colour the atmosphere of quite a fair-sized planet. I never heard anything like it elsewhere.

The General's great hobby was farming. On the day of my arrival at Pimento Park he took me all over the home farm—about two hundred acres—showing me everything there was to be seen. His eight Alderneys, as pretty a lot as you could find in the country, pleased me most of all. It was while we were looking at them, I remember, that for the first and the last time he expressed his wishes with regard to Horace's education.

'The boy's a d——d fool,' he said, switching his cane savagely, 'bred out, as a matter of fact. There never was a Hardwick-Giles like him before, that I'll take my dying oath to. The only way with a miserable infernal milksop like Horace is to *drive* him. I place him entirely in your hands and under your orders. The sole thing I insist upon is that you don't allow him to lounge about. Directly his work's over, turn him out of doors. Make him ride and shoot and fish and climb trees—anything of that sort. Thrash him as much as ever you like, or, if you don't care about doing it, bring him to me. Toughen him, make him a man—if you can. And *if* you can, I'll eat my infernal hat. By heavens! I'm sick of the very sight of him.' As he uttered the last words, the General's face turned purple with suppressed rage.

Poor Horace! A more lovable and intelligent boy never lived. Nature, by the combination of moulding him throughout on the most delicate lines, and giving him a father afflicted with liver to such a degree as the General, had foredoomed his early years to be years of utter misery. He trembled and turned pale at the sound of the General's voice; he was minus the smallest spark of animal 'go' and pluck. His nervousness when outside a horse was a heartrending sight to behold. Had he been sent to a public school I do not believe he would have survived the first term. As to tuition, I had only to set him his tasks and I knew they would be done—and brilliantly done—on my return. The boy took to me cordially from the very first, feeling, I think, that I understood him; and I am happy in the thought that before twelve months were over I had, by judicious encouragement and careful consideration of his ultra-sensibility, not only shaped him into some resemblance to an ordinary boy, but had also effected a very considerable amendment in the General's opinion and treatment. By the end of the second year my pupil had almost

entirely outgrown his nervousness, while the General—strange metamorphosis—told me in confidence that he considered him the cleverest, the most promising, and the most gentlemanly boy he had ever known.

. . . . . .

It was towards the end of August—my first August at Pimento Park.

At half-past seven Horace and I were in the saddle. Just outside the park gates we met the General returning from one of his early rides—a long and rapid one, judging by the appearance of his old blue roan. We reached the house again in time for breakfast at half-past eight. The General was in a more than usually peppery condition that morning. He damned the coffee, he damned the kidney, he damned the bacon, he damned the cold grouse, and the footman and the cream, and Horace and several other things—all vehemently. Horace never lifted his eyes from his plate. I had become quite hardened to this kind of thing; the General's frame of mind never interfered with my own equanimity. I attributed his more than normal irritability to the weather; the morning was sultry in the extreme.

Breakfast over, I went with Horace to his study, and set him the morning's tasks. After this I sought my own room, where I sat digesting a treatise on political economy for upwards of an hour. All at once the General's voice reached my ears. I looked from the window—my private sitting-room was on the first floor—and saw him stamping up and down the drive, swishing his cane with savage emphasis and raving incoherently. Whether his conduct were due to some annoying *contretemps*, or merely to his liver having taken up a stingingly inimical line of conduct, I was, of course, unable to tell; I had had the knowledge forced upon me that either of these possible causes was capable of temporarily throwing the General into a mental state not far removed from that of a dangerous lunatic. For twenty minutes or so I watched him while he paced backwards and forwards, voicing his fury upon the empty air, and striking to right and left with his cane. Political economy being hopelessly out of the question while the General remained on the drive, I marked the place in my treatise and went down to Horace's room.

I found the boy peeping at his father from behind the curtains. He was as white as a sheet. 'What's happened?' I asked.

'I--don't know, Mr. Harding. I—I think it must be his liver again. Look! he's getting better now, isn't he?'

The General certainly seemed better when I peered at him round the curtain. He had tucked the cane under his arm, and, with hands folded behind his back, was standing as though wrapped in some deep train of thought. A few seconds afterwards he looked at his watch, then he made a bee-line for the stables.

'He's going for another gallop,' Horace said. 'I'm sure it's only his liver. He can't keep still for a minute—and you know how awful he was this morning.'

Horace returned to his lessons; I returned to my reading.

At luncheon the General was worse than I had ever seen him before—far worse than he had been at breakfast. Not a thing upon the table escaped his anathemas—anathemas which were shared by his own eyes and liver, and by the butler and the footman, and Horace, and all the flies in creation, one of whom was remorselessly persistent in its attentions to the General's bald pate. The General always drew the line at myself, no doubt knowing pretty well what the result would be if he honoured me with his abuse. Horace shook; the butler and the footman, well seasoned though they were to this sort of display, went through their duties with lengthened faces and agitated mien. I often wondered how the General ever managed to keep his servants at all, until I learned that he paid them double the wages they could earn elsewhere. He was rolling in money.

Horace seized the first opportunity of slinking out of the room. I found him in his study a few minutes afterwards.

'Isn't it almost too hot to ride, Mr. Harding?' he said. Horace never lost any possible excuse for shirking a ride.

'It's too hot for anything,' I answered with a yawn.

'Couldn't we stroll down to the low meadows and see if we can kick up some young rabbits in the grass? With the state the governor's in to-day, I don't know what would happen if he found me hanging about the house.'

'Right you are,' I said. 'If there aren't any rabbits, we'll sprawl in the shade.' I felt more inclined for sprawling than anything else. It was the hottest day I ever remember.

So with our guns under our arms we started for the low meadows.

Horace was the very worst hand with a gun it is possible to imagine. If his charge happened to strike within three feet of a sitting object, it might be considered a rattling good shot—for Horace. His nervousness rendered him utterly incapable of holding straight. He showed considerable improvement before I

left Pimento Park; but at the time of which I am writing it was a pretty safe twelve to one on a rabbit in its seat at fifteen yards, and—well, perhaps a thousand to three on the same animal running. That neat little 28-bore never failed to inspire me with feelings of caution and respect when I saw it in Horace's hands. I invariably placed myself behind its owner.

The low meadows, long and narrow, lay one on either side of a tall quick hedge. Their surface was dotted over with many small patches of nettles and rough grass, disdained by stock but beloved by those rabbits who preferred an open-air resting-place to the less bracing atmosphere of their earths. Beginning at the part farthest from the hedge, we took the first meadow in three strips, treading out every patch likely to hold a rabbit. According to my wont I kept carefully behind Horace. Twice I wiped his eye, accounting for a couple of three-quarter-grown rabbits in the very pink of condition. While taking the final strip my companion kicked into a small lump of bracken not six yards from the hedge. Out jumped a diminutive rabbit, bang went Horace's gun. If the rabbit—he did not look much more than eight weeks old—had been hit at such a range, his death would have proved a very sudden one indeed. But he was not hit. I saw the charge cut into the hedge about four feet above bunny's disappearing scut. Horace admitted that the gun went off before it reached his shoulder.

A few yards further on stood a lordly beech, opposite the gate which led from one meadow to the other. The heat was overpowering; unable to resist temptation so great we flung ourselves down in the shade.

I lighted my pipe, but did not smoke for long. When I woke again and looked at my watch it was nearly four. Horace also had been napping.

'Let's walk the other meadow,' I said, rising and stretching myself. 'After that, we'll try the plantation for wood-pigeons, and then toddle home.'

According to my usual custom, I let Horace go through the gate first. I saw him stop suddenly and turn white—not a very uncommon proceeding. Following the direction of his glance, my eyes rested on an object by the side of the hedge—a cow stretched out at full length upon her side. A few steps brought us to her.

It was Audhumla—the pick of all the herd, the General's greatest pride in life—dead! In the upper part of her neck was a gaping wound; a charge of shot had cut through her jugular

BANG WENT HORACE'S GUN

vein. The wound and the ground below were caked with drying blood.

The gentle, the beautiful Audhumla! Many, many a time had I sat on that very gate and gazed upon her as she browsed before me, while the smoke curled up from my well-loved pipe and my mind was at peace. And now!

Neither Horace nor I could fail to grasp instantly how she had met her fate. The boy sank down upon the ground and covered his face with his hands, moaning in despair.

'What a wretchedly, beastly, *cruelly* unlucky thing to happen!' I said. It did indeed seem about the most atrociously bad piece of luck that could possibly occur. 'It was the purest of accidents,' I added, 'and the General must be made to see it in that light.'

'Oh, oh, oh!' Horace moaned. 'I ought to have known she was there. I ought never to have put up my gun at all.'

'It would be utterly absurd to blame you for the accident,' I answered. 'How on earth can anyone tell what's on the other side of a hedge if he can't see through it?'

Horace rose slowly from the ground. There was a look in his face I had never seen there before—a look of firmness, even pluck.

'Mr. Harding,' he said slowly, 'you don't know what the governor is. He would never listen to reason; he thinks more of Audhumla than anything else in the world. He'll *kill* me if he finds it out; he'll thrash me till I'm dead.'

'Nonsense!'

'I can't stand it, I *won't* stand it,' the boy went on. 'I'm going to bury her if I can; if I can't, I'm going to run away from home. I don't ask you to help me, Mr. Harding, and I don't ask you not to say anything about it if you think you ought to.'

'My dear Horace——'

'They'll think she's broken out through the bottom fence and strayed; she did that last year and they found her ten miles away.'

'But——'

'You can't talk me out of it, Mr. Harding. *You* must do what you think you ought to do. I'm not going to be thrashed to death.'

I felt somewhat bewildered. 'Smith will be down for the other cows at five,' I said.

'I know. And it's four now. It'll take me about twenty

minutes to cut home and get a spade. I shall have to slip round through the back shrubberies.'

For a moment Horace and I looked at one another in silence. I was astonished—it is the least forcible word I can use—at the boy's determination, determination born of despair. At the end of that moment I acted on an irresistible impulse.

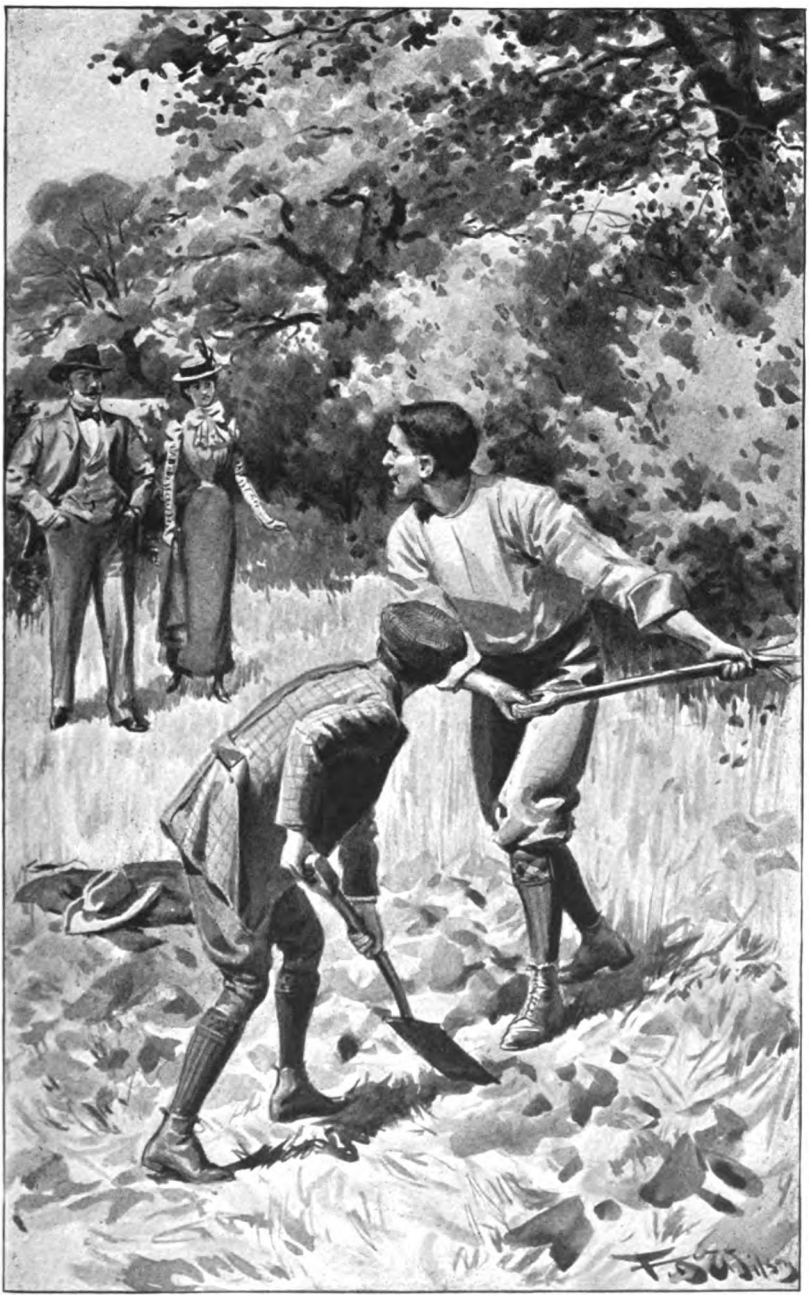
'Horace,' I said, 'bring two spades. I'll stick to you whatever happens.'

I saw tears start to his eyes. 'You're a brick, Mr. Harding.' A second after he was speeding on his way towards the house.

It was twenty-five minutes past four when Horace, breathless and almost dropping, arrived with the two spades. We had thirty-five minutes before us; Smith, the cowman, never failed to reach the meadow exactly at five. Thirty-five minutes in which to dig a cow's grave and bury the cow!

I threw off my coat and hat and buckled in with a will. Horace did the same. I slaved as I had never slaved before. Finding, after two or three minutes, that the boy hindered rather than expedited proceedings, I told him to put down his spade and keep watch. He did so rather reluctantly. Then, my field of action unimpeded, I set myself to do all I knew in this race against time. I worked like a dozen navvies; the perspiration streamed from my face in great drops. But I had undertaken the task and I meant to complete it, at any rate if such a feat lay within the power of a single man. I chopped and shovelled, and shovelled and chopped, and threw out bushel after bushel of the loose chalky soil. My back and arms felt the unaccustomed strain to a terrible extent, my wind troubled me almost as much, my hands were badly blistered before I had been at the work five minutes.

My excitement all the while was of the kind which does not often come more than once in a lifetime. Every moment I fancied I could hear the General's voice. It was the only occasion on which thoughts of the General filled me with something approaching terror. Each minute my true position in the matter was forced more strongly upon me. I felt like a criminal of criminals—almost like a murderer. More, a great deal more than I cared to think about, hung upon the success or otherwise of my self-imposed exploit. If the General should catch me in the very act; if Smith should arrive before his time; if, though I succeeded in putting Audhumla under ground by five, it should all come out afterwards; if my conduct should reach my uncle's ears—thoughts such as these surged one after another



A VOICE BURST UPON OUR EARS

through my whirling brain. I had practically made up my mind that if our dark deed was discovered and Horace really bolted, I should bolt too, when I suddenly became aware of the fact that I had reached the solid chalk. To attempt to work that without a mattock would be utterly useless. However, the grave seemed to me deep enough. I scrambled out and looked at my watch. It was only a quarter to five; we could do all the rest, I thought, in not more than seven or eight minutes.

Horace flew towards me from the gate. 'Quick,' I said, 'catch hold of her fore legs and raise them at the same time that I raise the hind ones.'

I had dug the grave right against Audhumla's back. At the third attempt we succeeded in rolling her over. She subsided into her last resting-place with a dull thud. The grave proved a perfect fit; no professional sexton could have planned its dimensions better. Then, with feverish haste, we shovelled in the loose earth, Horace working like a Briton. We had filled up the grave and trodden it down and were already scattering the surplus earth when a voice burst upon our ears:

'Hallo, Harding! what the dickens are you doing?'

It was the General! His niece, Miss Eunice Hardwick-Giles, a pretty girl of about seventeen who lived with her widowed mother some twelve miles away, walked by his side. Miss Eunice was in the habit of driving over unexpectedly every three or four weeks. Her presence always acted as a potent emollient to the General's irascibility. While Horace was keeping watch upon the gate, running to and fro every minute, the General and his companion had approached unnoticed from the opposite direction.

Miss Eunice saved me from answering the General's question. She broke in with: 'Good gracious, Horace! what *is* the matter with you? You're as white as a sheet.'

I glanced at Horace. He looked like a corpse—a corpse, and nothing else.

'What on earth induced you to bury her?' came the General's voice again. He was prodding the grave with his cane.

'Oh—exercise!' I answered.

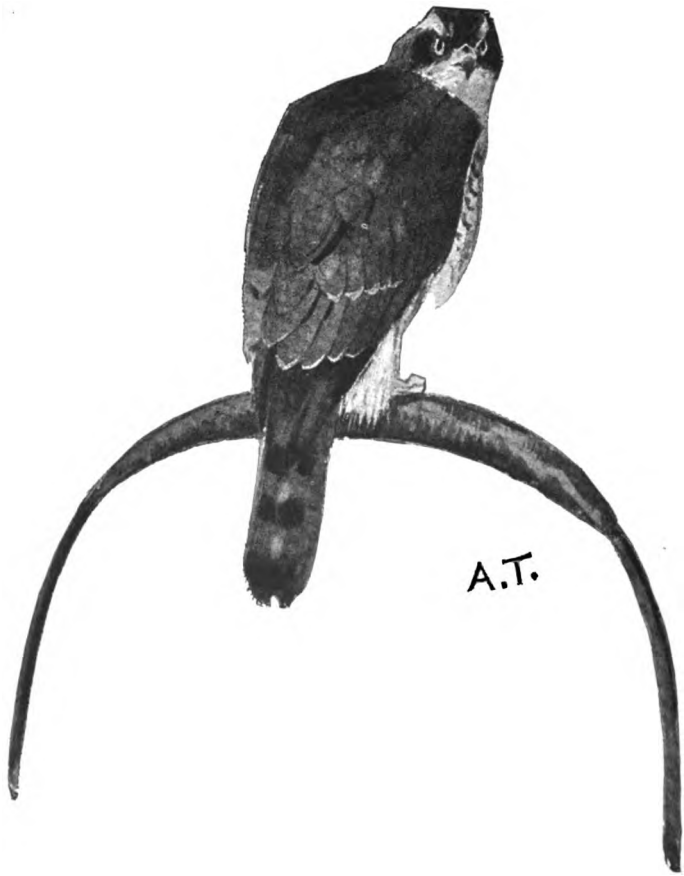
The General laughed a melancholy kind of laugh. 'Rummiest way of taking exercise I ever heard of in my life,' he said. 'Getting into training for the "First," I suppose—pretty good training too, I should think, by the look of you. Does Smith know?'

'No—I've not told him—yet.'

'A pleasant surprise for him when he finds out. I gave him orders to start the grave the first thing to-morrow morning.'

'Poor Audhumla!' said Miss Eunice, glancing at my hands and boots. 'Wasn't there really *any* hope *at all*, uncle?'

'No, poor thing, not the slightest. She'd been down since four o'clock yesterday. The vet was here again at six this morning and stayed till past eleven. When he said there was no earthly chance of recovery, I had her shot at once. I couldn't bear to see her suffer. It's upset me more than you can imagine. If I live to a hundred I shall never have another like Audhumla.'



A FIRST GROUSE DRIVE

BY PERCY STEPHENS

So many able writers have already described the pleasures of grouse driving that at first sight it would seem a work of supererogation, if not presumption, to attempt to say anything fresh about it; and my only excuse for doing so must be that I do not think the subject has ever been treated from the point of view of a novice to this particular form of sport. Most, if not all, of the articles respecting it that I can call to mind have been the work of such past masters of the art of shooting in all its branches, that they have naturally dealt with the subject from their own lofty standpoint, and not from that of the humble mediocrity, or beginner. We are all conversant with the numerous articles on 'first' tigers, or stags or salmon, which so frequently recur in sporting periodicals, but I do not remember to have ever come across one on a 'first' grouse drive; and it is with a view to rectifying this lamentable omission that I venture in all humility to pen these lines.

Let me therefore invite my readers to follow me in fancy, on a lovely morning in early September, to a grey-stone shooting lodge in a remote North Country dale, and to allow me to introduce them to a young gentleman, whom we will call Jones, who is to form the hero of this sketch, and who—*o terque quaterque beatus!*—has arrived here on the previous evening to enjoy his first experience of grouse driving. Let us further imagine Mr. Jones to be entering upon that glorious time of life when the youth is blossoming into manhood, when the consulship of Plancus appears perpetual, when the appetite for sport, as for everything else, is fresh and uncloyed; and let us further imagine him at the moment of introduction to be smoking his after-breakfast pipe in a state of pleasurable excitement tempered with misgivings as to the figure he will cut in the day's proceedings.

For our young friend has not failed to notice that the other

members of the party, on learning that this is to be his maiden essay at killing driven grouse, have lost no opportunity of impressing on him, both collectively and individually, a sense of the difficulties to himself, as well as the dangers incurred by his companions, which beset the tiro in this most fascinating of all kinds of shooting; and consequently he is a little perturbed in spirit, a feeling, however, which quickly vanishes when he is presently summoned to share in the drawing of lots which shall decide which 'butts' or 'boxes' are to be occupied by the different guns in the first drive.

And here let me pause to ask my reader's indulgence for the frequent but unavoidable use of the terms 'butt' and 'box,' as the circular erections of peat and turf used to conceal the sportsmen are respectively styled in different parts of the North. They are occasionally called 'batteries' in Northumberland—one can generally trust a Northumbrian to use a word with as many r's in it as possible, and I *have* heard a Scotchman describe them as 'stances.'

As the draw proceeds Jones cannot but remark with amusement the eagerness with which each member of the party selects his slip of paper, and the outspoken expressions of delight or disgust with which he hails his luck; for he has yet to learn that in the world of sport there is no so shameless an egotist, except perhaps a fox-hunter, as a professed grouse driver. Our young friend draws No. 3, which he is informed is one of the best butts; and now securing wraps and waterproofs the whole party pack themselves into a wagonette drawn by a pair of rough-looking, but well formed, 'dale' ponies, which will be able to transport them to within a few hundred yards of the spot where the first drive is to take place.

Ere long the carriage pulls up at a turn in the road, where a perfect army of keepers, loaders and dogs is awaiting them. The sportsmen descend with great alacrity; a few moments are spent in final arrangements; a tall, lanky, red-haired and red-whiskered dalesman is told off to act as Jones' loader during the day; and then the whole party, flanked by retrievers, that like the war horse seem already to scent the coming carnage, move off up the hill to where on the skyline above them a row of "butts," looking like stunted martello towers, marks the scene of the day's operations. Gentle as the slope of the hill seems from below, it is none the less a stiffish pull up it; and our hero is not sorry to discover that his butt is in the centre, and not at the far extremity of the line.

Arrived there he finds that his loader—whose name on inquiry proves to be Mattha' (*Anglicè* Matthew) Thompson—has already put the guns together, opened the cartridge magazine, placed it ready to his hand, and tied his retriever to a stake driven into the ground for that purpose, so that his master has nothing to do but step into his temporary domicile and take stock of his surroundings. It is a lovely day; a bright warm sun tempered by a slight breeze, with a crisp autumnal feeling in the air that raises our young friend's spirits, as he leans on the peat wall in front of him and surveys the scene. The long line of butts is built on a gentle slope; in front is a flattish stretch of heather over which the birds will be brought in the first drive; behind is a deep ravine or gully, beyond which the ground rises rather sharply. Whilst engaged in these observations, Jones' feelings are a little ruffled by what he considers the needlessly obtrusive manner in which his immediate neighbours—evidently uneasy at their proximity to the novice—wave their arms and shout at him so as to attract his attention and mark the line of fire.

But now a double shot has been fired in the air to warn the far-distant drivers that they may begin to move. Jones hastily clutches his gun, and gazes earnestly to his front, expecting every moment to see huge flocks of grouse bearing down on him. When about ten minutes have passed without anything occurring, he begins to fear there must be some hitch in the proceedings, and is actually turning to ask his taciturn attendant's opinion, when a little speck, no bigger than a small fly, moving over a distant ridge, catches his eye; but ere he can determine what it is it disappears behind an inequality of the ground. He keeps his eye on its line, however, and when it eventually emerges once more into view makes out that it is a grouse flying in his direction. Sure enough it *is* a grouse; an elderly cock who has had two seasons of this sort of thing, and 'by gad, sir, has made up his mind to stand such nonsense no longer,' and so the poor old gentleman has determined to shake the dust of the locality from off his feathery feet, and seek a more peaceful home; a resolution, by the way, he would inevitably have broken as evening came round. So he thinks to evade his enemies by an early start, and flies straight and true towards the line of butts, unconscious that they are already tenanted. Again and yet again does he appear and disappear from view as he follows every rise and fall of the ground, but at last he emerges from a little dip in front of the guns, and flies swift and low straight at Jones' box. Our young friend, conscious that the eyes of his companions are all fixed on

him, awaits his coming with great nervousness, and then when the bird is within thirty yards fires point blank at it, when, greatly to his relief, and I may add astonishment, it seems to hurl itself at the ground with such force that it almost rebounds into the air, and then lies with wings still faintly clapping in death almost at our hero's very feet.

Great is that gentleman's delight, and fain would he sally forth at once to gather up the corpse of his victim; whilst flushed with success he deems the difficulty of killing driven grouse ridiculously overrated. In the next few minutes, however, he finds cause to alter his opinion, for very soon a covey comes flying high in the air at an angle of 45° across his front. He waits too long, not having as yet realised the pace of a driven grouse, becomes 'flustered,' fires at the covey instead of in front of a particular bird, and misses clean with both barrels. Before he has had even time to get his second gun up to his shoulder the covey has swept past, and his eye has been neatly 'wiped' by his neighbour on the right, who, an old stager at grouse driving, scientifically drops two birds in front of him, and a third behind his butt. Our young friend has now a period of inactivity during which to dwell on this incident, until, while he is enviously watching a small lot of birds heading for a distant box, his hitherto silent attendant gently touches him, and says quietly 'They're coomin' noo.'

Coming now! Indeed they are! Early as it is in the season, the birds have already begun to 'pack,' and a vast cloud of grouse, which keeps growing in numbers as it advances, is bearing straight down on the line of butts. The astonished Jones has scarce time to believe his eyes ere the vanguard of the pack is upon him. A large covey flying some twenty yards wide of his butt first catches his attention, and, picking a bird as quickly as he can, he fires, as he *thinks*, well in front of it, though as a matter of fact his eye, unaccustomed to this sort of shooting, deceives him, and he really aims straight at the bird, which means about two feet behind it. Needless to say it flies on none the worse, greatly to our friend's perturbation; and in a terrible fluster he discharges his second barrel in the same way at another bird, with of course a like result.

Frenzied with disappointment young Jones seizes his second gun, and seeing another lot of birds coming for his butt reserves his fire until it is close to him, thinking this will render his aim more deadly—a very common mistake among young grouse drivers. Then as the grouse come whizzing round him like a swarm of

FIRES POINT BLANK AT IT

great bees, he selects one skimming over the heather within a few feet of him, and, firing at it point blank in a tremendous hurry, adds no doubt considerably to the bird's terror, but otherwise does it no visible harm. A species of insane fury against this particular grouse then seizes him, and, neglecting several easy chances coming straight at him, he turns round and fires another fruitless shot at it when it is about eighty yards behind his butt. Thrice does poor Jones repeat a similar performance until he is nearly mad with rage and disappointment; the birds *look* so easy as they come towards him that he cannot understand how it is that he misses them; but even as he despairingly makes up his mind that he will *never* be able to kill them relief hails in sight. A solitary grouse comes flying straight towards him, in a line that will bring it just over his head, and when it is within twenty-five yards he throws up his gun and fires at it, with, however, faint hope of success. But somehow or another he has momentarily caught the knack of driving shots; his eye and hand act in unison; his gun no longer dwells on the bird, but swings forward in advance of it. Discharged without being checked in its swing, the shot catches the grouse fairly in the head, and, doubling it up like a clasp-knife, brings it hurtling through the air to fall with a tremendous thump against the very wall of the butt.

This lucky shot gives our young friend more confidence in himself, and enables him to get the better of his excitement; so pulling himself together he tries to shoot steadily. He certainly has plenty of opportunities of doing it, for as the drivers, now faintly audible, approach, the birds seem to come in one perpetual string. Now a covey flying low and warily along the top of the heather; now a solitary old cock hastening along at thirty miles an hour; anon a straggler which, separated from its companions, comes rocketing down the line of guns, or a pack of birds turned in by the flanking drivers, which comes wildly athwart the row of butts.

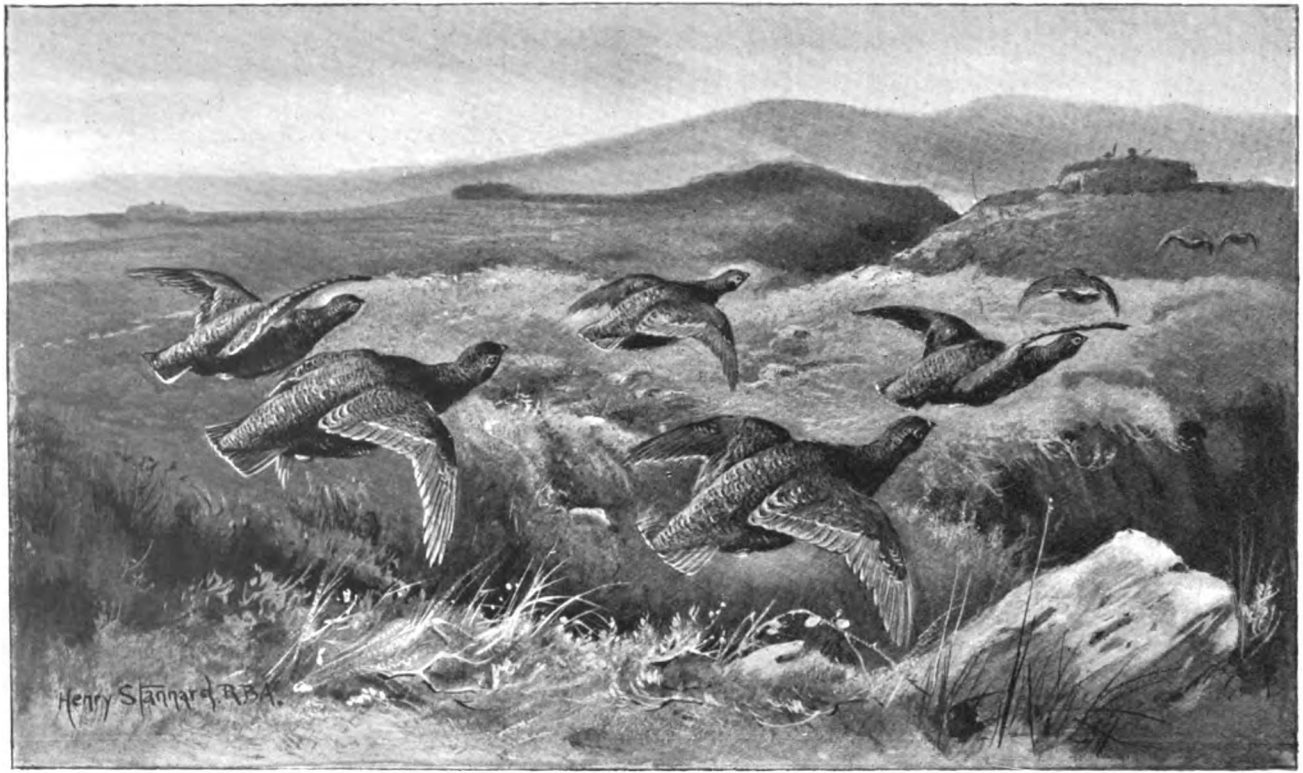
But this sort of thing is too good to last long. Soon the stream of birds begins to diminish, and finally ceases; a last straggler which has been wounded early on in the drive, and pitched in front of the butts, rises only to fall again, and then, as the array of stalwart flag-bearing drivers comes swinging in, Jones hands his gun over to his loader and excitedly asks 'how many he has "down"?' for he himself has long lost count of his victims. 'Nobbut nine,' is that worthy's laconic answer; and Jones can hardly believe his ears. Nine! and on the floor of his butt lie

no fewer than sixty-three empty cartridge cases! Alas for poo human nature! No sooner is his attendant's back turned tha our young friend hastily stamps half of them into the soft groun a subterfuge, by the way, to which far more veteran grous drivers than himself frequently descend. Moreover, he soo experiences another rebuff of fortune, as it is one thing to hav nine birds down and another to gather them up; and the unite efforts of himself, his loader and his dog can only recover seve of them before it is time for him to gather up his belongings, an move into the next butt—each gun 'moving up one' after ever drive until he reaches the top of the line, when he descends t the bottom and starts *de novo*.

Now comes a hurried gathering of the sportsmen, with eage questionings of 'How many did you get that time?' and answers some triumphant, some despondent, and others, I fear, hardl veracious; while the wag of the party chimes in with the time honoured jest 'that he got two, but only saw one.' But there i not much time for 'coffee-housing;' another set of beaters ha already begun to drive fresh ground towards them, and an odd bird which comes flying over them, amid agonised yells of 'mark over' from their loaders, sends the gunners scampering back t their boxes, as though engaged in the child's game of 'Genera Post,' only to find on reaching them that they might have con tinued their conversation for another ten minutes.

Ascertaining that there is no need for immediate action, Jones lights his pipe and passes his tobacco pouch on to hi loader, an attention which has the effect of somewhat loosening that worthy's tongue. Our young friend enters into conversation with him, and is astonished at the shrewdness with which he can talk on many of the general topics of the day, despite the fact that he has probably never been twenty miles away from hi home in the whole of his life. A staunch Tory, too, is Mattha Thompson; and with profuse apologies to my Liberal readers I cannot refrain from quoting a trenchant, if slightly narrow minded, remark of his. A short time before, on a neighbouring moor, a certain well-known Radical M.P. had handsomely 'peppered' his host, a proceeding which drew from the intolerant Mattha' the sarcastic observation 'that it nobbut sairved Mr. C. (the gentleman who had been shot) reet (right), for asking Home Reulers to shutt wi' him!'

But soon a couple of shots from one of the outside 'batteries' warns our hero that the 'return' drive has begun, and he snatches up his gun and springs to attention. He is now facing



FLYING LOW AND WARILY ALONG THE TOP OF THE HEATHER

a long sloping hill off which the grouse will be driven, instead of the heathery flat of the last drive, and as he surveys the scene before him he is struck by its portentous stillness. How true is the saying that a calm comes before a storm! The whole bright hillside is bathed in glowing sunshine; save for the hum of insect life in the heather, or the crow of some wary old cock grouse already scenting fresh danger, not a sound is to be heard; a little merlin, tiniest and least harmful of hawks, floats motionless in the balmy air—

'All, all is peaceful, all is still.'

And yet it merely requires a very small bird to appear on the scene to totally change it into one of noise and discord.

High in the air a vagrant snipe makes its appearance, and for some inexplicable reason chooses to fly from top to bottom of the whole line of butts, when every sportsman apparently deems it incumbent on him to discharge two barrels at it as it passes; but as it is probably eighty or more yards above them, their efforts are naturally fruitless, and the snipe pursues its way unharmed, with many a plaintive bleat and sidelong turn and swoop. I have been at many grouse drives, but I cannot recall one on which this episode did not occur, until I have been forced to the conclusion that it must always be *the same snipe*; a sort of scolopacian *Juif Errant* compelled to dree its weird in this fashion; and the fact that it has never been seen to fall strengthens me in my belief.

Scarcely has the snipe disappeared when the grouse begin to come forward once more, and right royal sport do they afford, for as they are driven off the opposing hill they do not dip into the valley, but 'rocket' high over the heads of the sportsmen; and of all forms of shooting there is nothing to equal this. No other sport with the gun can compare with the charm of seeing a covey of grouse rise perhaps nearly a quarter of a mile away, and of watching the birds as they bear down on your butt thirty yards high in the air; marking as they approach the regular cadence of their wings, now beating the air with short sharp strokes, now still for a moment as they glide on apparently without effort; and then picking your birds as they come pelting over you to drop a right and left neatly and scientifically behind your butt. It is perhaps needless to add that the pleasure of this performance is considerably enhanced should the other guns be idle at the moment, and the successful shooter be conscious that they are watching him.

Young Jones at all events, whose previous experiences o shooting have been chiefly confined to ferreting and such humbl branches of sport, could not have conceived that there existe such glorious fun as this, and blazes manfully away, quite satis fied with himself if he kills one out of every six or seven bird that he fires at.

But the excitement of this particular drive is caused by th shifty tactics of a huge pack of birds which, after boldly comin forward to within two hundred yards of the butts, drop in th heather, evidently suspicious of those innocent-looking erections and can be seen running about with their heads up, no doub dubious, poor things, as to whether the devil or the deep sea b their best chance. Now does every sportsman crouch low in hi box fearful lest he may scare them; for the same reason a stra brace of birds is allowed to pass unshot at; and then as th beaters approach the pack rises, and makes in an undecide straggling fashion away to the right flank. I use the word 'undecided'—for want of a better one to express my meaning—advisedly, for had the grouse *quite* made up their minds what to do, the great wall of China itself would not have stopped them. Fortunately their move is checked in time by the efforts of the 'flankers,' who with much yelling, waving of flags and even throwing up of hats, contrive to turn them back over the guns, who now reap the reward of forbearance as the grouse, thoroughly 'désorientés,' scatter over them, affording every variety of rocket-ing, driving, and crossing shot, as a grand *finale* to the drive.

Jones is more fortunate in his 'pick up' after this drive, as he recovers all the eight birds he has managed to kill—at an expenditure of nearly sixty cartridges, be it noted—and is conse-quently able to view with equanimity a heated argument which arises between two of the guns as to the ownership of a certain dead grouse which both claim; a regrettable incident far too common in grouse driving, generally due to the prejudiced zeal of a loader or retriever. But fortunately there is little time for wrangling, as the whole party has to move half a mile across the moor to a fresh set of butts, and before they reach them the aggrieved parties have become reconciled over a cigarette.

Even if space permitted it, to attempt to describe each drive that takes place during the day would be trespassing a little too far on my readers' patience. Suffice it to say that, with the excep-tion of a short interval grudgingly given up to lunch, the moor is driven and redriven with unfailing regularity, and absence of any special incident, until the far sinking sun warns the sportsmen

that the next drive will be the last. By this time it is Jones' turn to occupy the topmost butt of the line, on the very crest of the great hill face along which they have been working all day, and as he reaches it he cannot but pause a moment, struck by the beauty of the view. From his very feet the ground falls away in one vast sheet of heather, broken only by some jutting crag of limestone, which gradually merges into the green, stone-wall divided pastures of a broad valley through which curve the head waters of a noble salmon river; and beyond the valley again the great solemn moors roll once more, tier above tier and hill beyond hill, until they fade away into the pale saffron twilight of the Northern evening. The air is keen almost to coldness, and yet, despite its exhilarating effect, there is a sense of 'vastness' about the scene which brings with it a feeling of awe, almost akin to sadness.

It must have been on some such evening as this that Heine wrote the 'Lorelei.'

But Jones' attention is suddenly diverted from the view by the appearance of a dark object travelling over the moor in his direction, which he at first takes to be a stray dog, and mutters anathema on its careless owner. But as it draws nearer its easy loping canter is unmistakable. Yes, it is Reinecke himself—a grey, grim, greyhound sort of gentleman, very different from his ruddy, rabbit-fed kinsmen of the low country, and bearing an even worse reputation than they—a ravisher of sitting hen grouse and weakly lambs, whose castle of Malepartus in yonder limestone cliffs has borne full oft the fruitless onslaught of half the outraged shepherds and keepers in the dale.

Our hero has somehow acquired the impression that vulpecide —I blush to write the word—is not only justifiable but commendable in these moorland solitudes, and anxiously asks Mattha' if he is to shoot poor 'Reynolds,' now fast approaching—is there any animal that can travel as swiftly and as gracefully over difficult ground as a fox?—and is considerably relieved by the energy with which his attendant negatives the proposition, averring with great warmth that 'nee trew sportsman wad shutt a fox,' and dilating at the same time on the glorious hunts which he and his fellow-dalesmen enjoy in the winter with the aid of a 'bobbery' pack, composed of three couple of nondescript hounds and all the collies and terriers of the neighbourhood.

But Jones need have had no misgivings as to what course to pursue; the fox saves him all anxiety on that score, as, long

before it comes within range of the butts, it suddenly stops with uplifted paw to eye them suspiciously, and then turning aside among some broken ground disappears as instantaneously as though the earth had swallowed it up.

All too soon for our enthusiastic young friend does the drive come to an end. Fain would he continue the sport, did not even he recognise that it is impossible to shoot in the dark; and so he reluctantly hands over his guns to Mattha', and makes his way down to where the rest of the party are awaiting the result of the day's sport, as arrived at after much mental labour and intricate calculation on a dirty bit of paper by the head keeper. Two hundred and ninety-four brace is at length his verdict; of which total Jones privately and ruefully estimates he can only claim forty-one head, obtained at a cost of over two hundred cartridges; and well satisfied the sportsmen depart, amid a chorus of 'Good-nights' from keepers and beaters, to where their carriage is already awaiting them on the road, and are whirled home to feast on mountain mutton and grouse, as a prelude to that dreamless sleep engendered by healthy exercise and moorland air.

Three more such delightful days ensue ere Jones' visit comes to an end—days for him of pure unadulterated enjoyment such as he will probably never experience again in the world of sport, be the fates ever so kind to him. His enthusiasm soars above such drawbacks as wet weather, which is not long in making its appearance, and a large expenditure of cartridges for rather meagre results; and he is very, very sorrowful when the time comes for him to clamber into the dogcart which takes him ten miles across the moors to a little wayside station, and sorrier still when some two hours later he picks up the South express on the main line, and realises that every throb of the engine is bearing him farther away from those purple moors where he has had such good fun. How miserably tame and flat do the fertile fields of the Midlands seem, and how vulgar and monotonous the lengthy South-country drawl of the inhabitants thereof, after the glorious rolling scenery and rugged dialect of the dales! Above all, how depressing is London, as at last the train slowly clanks its way into the great vaulted terminus, where the electric light is feebly battling with an early autumn fog!

PUBLIC SCHOOLMEN IN FIRST-CLASS CRICKET

BY HAROLD MACFARLANE

THAT the line of demarcation which is supposed to exist between first and second—indeed of every—class cricket is of the most attenuated dimensions, although it is supposed to be of the broadest by the compilers and devourers of averages, no one who pays the most casual attention to University and Public School cricket can fail to see. Yet if a match was proposed between the lowest county in the fight for the Championship and a public school the cricketing public would stand aghast at the audacity of the latter at even entertaining the idea of such a meeting. If a match was announced between a first-class team of the same calibre and an eleven picked from the flower of public school cricketers chosen at the end of the summer term, ninety-nine out of a hundred self-appointed critics would prognosticate the utter annihilation of the 'schoolboys;' and yet, allow eight or nine months to elapse, not the least vestige of surprise would be shown if a University team containing two-thirds of the afore-mentioned picked eleven went into the field to encounter the same first-class eleven, and, what is more, the majority of the said critics would expect them to win. With the exception of the months added to their respective ages the men are the same, their experience of cricket is the same at the beginning of one season as it was at the end of the last, they are not from want of practice perhaps in quite as good form as they were at the close of the previous season; but the magic word 'University' has converted them from what some people might describe as fourth-class to first-class cricketers. It is passing strange.

It was not with the intention of urging the powers that be at 'Lord's' to institute a match between M.C.C. and ground and an

eleven chosen from the combined public schools that I began this article; and in view of the almost insuperable difficulties the unfortunate secretary would have to overcome in order to get together a side representative of school cricket—however interesting such an encounter would be, and however valuable from the *cachet* it would give to the chosen players—I am quite of an opinion that such a match is too much to hope for, too much to ask.

There are occasions, however, when public schoolmen by their brilliant batting or bowling force the cricketing world to recognise them as first-class. Such for instance was S. H. Day, who made so remarkable a first appearance for Kent at Cheltenham against Gloucestershire in 1897. For Malvern against Repton, Day scored 73, the highest innings in the match, and his average for his school amounted to 47·6 runs per innings; a more than creditable feat in view of the fact that he was only assisted by one 'not out' innings out of the seventeen he played. In his first innings against Gloucestershire he succumbed to Jessop's fast bowling after scoring 8; in the second he scored half a run more than exactly half the total put together for his side, and was then 'not out'—his total of 101 scored in three hours without a chance, comprising, amongst other hits, eleven 4's.

When Harrow met Eton in 1890, out of the 126 runs scored for the former from the bat, A. C. MacLaren compiled 76 in the space of an hour and a half. This fine innings naturally attracted the attention of the Lancashire authorities; and just one month later he made his first appearance in first-class cricket at Brighton, and thereupon in two hours and ten minutes compiled 108 runs, also without giving a chance. His innings included nine 4's, six 3's, and fifteen 2's; he also made one catch. For his school MacLaren averaged 42 runs per innings with a highest score of 140; for his county his average was 23 runs at the season's close.

When J. R. Mason for Winchester in 1893 secured a batting average of 55 runs per innings and took 45 wickets for 16 runs apiece there was not the slightest doubt his cricketing future was secured. Against Eton, on that school's own ground, Mason scored 43 and 36—a long way the best aggregate for his side—and in addition took 8 wickets for 61 runs This was on June 23, and on July 27 he appeared for Kent, and, as on the occasion of MacLaren's *début*, his opponents were the Sussex eleven. The Winchester captain scored 31 (the third score on his side) and 1½ not out, and, with the exception of the return with Yorkshire, assisted Kent in all her remaining fixtures. As

he secured the second highest batting average on his side (27·7 for 12 innings, once 'not out,' with a highest score of 52) and further took 13 wickets, his first season for Kent was an undoubted triumph.

I do not know if it is, but if it is not a record the first appearance in first-class cricket of two public school cricket captains in the same county team and on the same day must be of very infrequent occurrence. On August 9, 1886, the Middlesex eleven that beat Gloucestershire by an innings and 87 runs included amongst its members the captains of the Harrow and Repton elevens—M. J. Dauglish and F. G. J. Ford. Against Eton, Dauglish had scored 24 and 10, and his average for his school amounted to 15 runs per innings. Ford's record against the Malvern team of that year was 59 runs in his only innings and 9 wickets in the combined innings of his opponents'; against Uppingham he scored 40 and 23, and again captured 9 wickets in the match; his batting average for Repton in all matches was 36, and he took 36 wickets for 11 runs each. On the occasion of their *débuts* in first-class cricket, Ford scored 23 and Dauglish 46 not out; and whilst in addition Ford bowled O. G. Radcliffe in the first innings and caught F. Townsend in the second, Dauglish stumped E. M. Grace in both innings, on both occasions off Burton's bowling, and caught H. V. Page—altogether the *débutants* did well. At the end of the season the Harrow captain had a better average for his county (17) than he had for his school. The Repton captain, however, was not quite so successful. Ten days later another public schoolman was initiated in first-class cricket—S. M. J. Woods of Brighton College to wit, for whom, we learn from Lillywhite (1887), 'if he does not over-bowl himself, there ought to be a grand future.' It is generally understood that Woods made his first appearance in first-class cricket as a member either of the Somersetshire or Cambridge elevens; but in the season of 1886 Somersetshire was not reckoned as a first-class county, and 'S. M. J.' had not gone up to Cambridge when Mr. G. N. Wyatt extended an invitation to him to play against his countrymen at Portsmouth. Spofforth, Trumble, Evans, Palmer, Garrett and Bruce were a formidable set of bowlers to make one's first appearance against, but we find that S. M. J. Woods was quite equal to the occasion, and knocked up 21 before he was caught by Bonnor in the first innings, and 11 in the second ere Palmer bowled him. Moreover he bowled 18 maidens out of 33 overs in the Australians' first innings and secured 2 wickets (H. J. H. Scott and G. J. Bonnor),

both clean bowled for 45 runs. For his school eleven that year he took 78 wickets for 7 runs each and scored an average of 34 runs for 12 completed innings. G. H. Cotterill, who had a batting average of 54 for the same team, also made his initial appearance in first-class company this season, assisting Sussex in their match against Lancashire, and his share in the victory was limited to 1 run and 1 catch. Against the same Australian team J. S. Robinson (of Harrow, but not of the eleven) scored 21 and 4 for 16 of Skegness, but the match cannot be regarded, in view of the odds given, as first-class. In 1886 at the Oval, A. P. Douglas (at that time at the Woolwich Academy, where he had a batting average of 43, almost three times as many runs as anyone else, but formerly of Dulwich) went in first for Surrey and defied the Leicestershire bowling for an hour and fifty minutes, scoring 47 runs. Strictly speaking this was not a first-class match, but it was a very noteworthy performance.

A contemporary of S. M. J. Woods and G. H. Cotterill in 1886, but also a member of the Brighton College team of 1887, for whom he took 70 wickets for 12 runs each and scored a batting average of 54, G. L. Wilson made his first appearance in first-class cricket for Sussex against Yorkshire at Bradford on June 20 of that year. In the first innings he unfortunately ran himself out when he had scored 24; but in the second, to quote from Wisden, he showed a long way the best form, and scored 58 in an hour and fifty minutes without anything like a chance, and this against the bowling of Ulyett, Emmett, Bates, Peel and Wade.

As a general rule, when the public school player makes his *début*, it is as a bat that he shines in particular, but A. H. Cochrane of Repton, who made his first appearance in first-class cricket for Derbyshire against Lancashire on August 5, 1884, was an exception; for although he tied with L. C. Docker (who afterwards played for Warwickshire) as the highest scorer in the first innings —they each ran up 21—it was when he was put on to bowl that his triumph came about, for he obtained 6 wickets—R. G. Barlow, J. Briggs, J. G. Heap, C. de Trafford (now of Leicestershire), A. N. Hornby, and L. D. Hildyard—for 51 runs. The same year A. B. Heath, the Cheltenham College captain, who was not very successful in the annual encounter with Clifton, 'played by far the best cricket for Hampshire' against Somersetshire. As a matter of fact he scored 42 out of 179 in the first, and 6 out of 88 in the second innings.

Undoubtedly the 'bright particular star' in the firmament of school cricket in 1885 was W. Rashleigh of Tonbridge School.

To show his value to his school I have only to mention that he had an average of 63 per innings, whilst the next highest average on his side was 14; moreover, Rashleigh scored an aggregate of 508 runs off his own bat; the remaining ten bats in the eleven together hit up 789 between them. The Kent authorities on August 24, 1885, decided to give him a trial; and against Hampshire and the bowling of the Oxford blue A. H. Evans, Rashleigh, *ætat* eighteen, scored 54. 'His defence was admirable, and his style was favourably commented upon,' says Wisden. Subsequently, in the next match Kent played—against Middlesex at Maidstone—he scored 8 and 59, the latter score compiled in two hours and forty-five minutes, and comprising eight 4's and six 2's amongst other hits, confirming the good opinion he had already earned.

Of other fairly recent *débuts* of public schoolmen in first-class cricket we have A. L. Watson—the 1885 captain of Winchester, whose school average was 42—playing for Hampshire against Sussex in the August of that year, and running up in the first innings the second highest score on his side. W. Tring, 'a youngster of seventeen from a private school at Redlands, near Bristol,' who, in June, 1887, at Moreton-in-the-Marsh, scored 11 and 9 out of 97 and 135 for Gloucestershire against Surrey, and in the following match against Yorkshire, staying in for four hours, playing all the Yorkshire bowling with the coolness of a veteran and running up a score of 62. When C. B. Fry in 1891 averaged 49 for Repton in batting, the Surrey Committee, ever on the look-out for fresh talent, gave him a trial in the Surrey second eleven against the second eleven of Notts; and the Repton bat justified his selection by scoring 65, and was forthwith drafted into the Surrey first eleven that played Warwickshire at the Oval on August 24, 1891, but he in company with several good batsmen fell a victim to West's bowling before he got set, and 3 and 0 'not out' represent his initial appearance on the classic enclosure. The same year W. B. Anderson, who scored 26 for Harrow in the match against Eton and took 3 wickets, was given a trial for Middlesex against Yorkshire, but Wainwright in a deadly mood proved too much for him and he succumbed for 0 and 2. In their return match with Middlesex in 1893, the Gloucestershire team were assisted by two Cliftonians—W. G. Grace, junior (who had a batting average of 29, and a bowling analysis of 11½ runs for 50 wickets for his school), and C. L. Townsend (who took 55 wickets for Clifton and had an average of 28)—both of whom were making their first appearance in county cricket. Townsend took 3 wickets, and W. G. Grace, junior, who was out in both innings

to catches by G. McGregor, scored the highest innings on his side in the second innings—11 runs. Three days later Townsend brought off his sensational feat of finishing off the Somersetshire innings with the 'hat' trick, *all three batsmen being stumped!* The Gloucestershire authorities, ever ready to give a promising player a trial, requisitioned the services of F. H. B. Champain, of the Cheltenham College team in 1895, in their match against Middlesex at Clifton that year. Champain, who had a batting average for his school of 33, and had taken 41 wickets at an average cost of 12 runs each, had in the previous June scored 104 and 46 for Cheltenham against Clifton, a fact not overlooked when he was at liberty to assist his county. His *début*, however, was not auspicious, and his three innings for his county failed to realise an aggregate amounting to double figures. In the following year Gloucestershire called on W. S. A. Brown, of Leys School, Cambridge, to assist them, and he made his first appearance in first-class cricket at Manchester, scoring 0 and 13 and taking Briggs' wicket; for Leys he had a batting average of 86, and had taken 57 wickets for 10 runs each. During the same season (1896) E. I. M. Barrett, a comrade of F. H. B. Champain of the Cheltenham team, who had a batting average of over 50 for his school, was invited to play for Hampshire. On his initial appearance for the team against Warwickshire he scored 24 and 1, and at the end of the season his average was 21 for his county with a top score of 47—a performance full of promise. Of the public schoolmen making their *débuts* in first-class cricket last year R. N. R. Blaker of Westminster is amongst the most prominent. His second innings of 81 against Charterhouse probably saved his school from a severe defeat; but his value throughout the season to the team he led is best shown by comparing his average of 45 per innings with that of the next best bat, whose average was but 21. His *début* in first-class cricket was made at Lord's late in August, when, playing for Kent, he scored 4 and not out 17. When a man has a batting average of 50 and has taken over 30 wickets for about 15 runs apiece for his school, he naturally stands a very good chance of a trial for his county; and C. L. A. Smith, of Brighton College, whose school averages coincide with the above, thoroughly justified the confidence of the Sussex County officials when they gave him a place in their team. His first innings for his county realised, we believe, 11 runs, and was scored off the Gloucestershire bowlers in August last, but his great innings was undoubtedly the 78 not out that he knocked up against Surrey at the Oval about ten days later—a masterly display.

'NEATH SUMMER SUNS

BY GEO. E. COLLINS

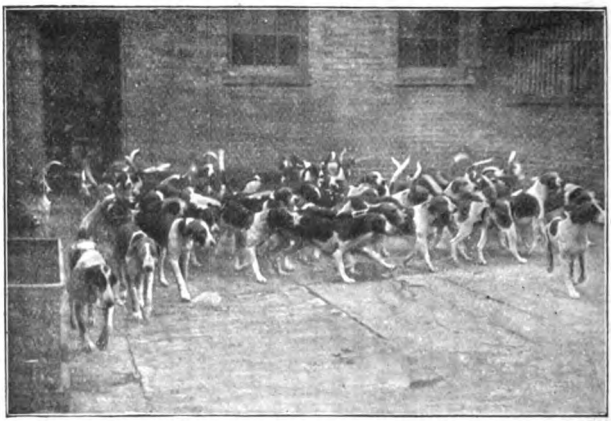
'How do you fill up your time when the hunting season is over?'

I wonder how many huntsmen have been asked that question, and out of the thousands of hunting men and women, how many there are who have any idea of the busy time that the hunt servants experience between the death of one season and the birth of another? They generally forget that in fox-hunting, as in the case of a dramatic performance, there is much work to be got through in the way of learning of parts and rehearsals before all hands are ready to appear before the public. A huntsman once told me that no sooner was one season over than the hardest part of the next one began. When the fixture 'to finish the season' has become a thing of the past, and in many cases before then, the average hunting man has put away the trappings of the chase, sent his horses up to Albert Gate or turned them out of work, and gives no further thought to fox-hunting till the autumn tints remind him that cub-hunting is in full swing, and that November is approaching.

Some of us, but more especially those whose lives are cast in the country, never forget the sport we love. We pay periodical visits to the kennels to see our old friends; and how pleased they seem to be to see us, as they come tumbling out into the yard for our inspection! Then there is the puppy we walked;

we must have him out on the flags to note his general improvement, discuss his good points and speculate on his chance of winning at the Puppy Show. And in due time we come to the rising generation, the hopes and fears of master and huntsman, gambolling round the staid, grave-looking matron whose puppies they are, in happy ignorance of the important part they will some day be called upon to play. Do we not note with approval how our own hunters are benefiting by their summer's rest, and with what pleasure we learn of a litter of cubs in the home spinney?

To take the kennels first: there is no slack time for the huntsman and his merry men during the summer. By the end of March all the puppies have been sent in from walk, and soon after



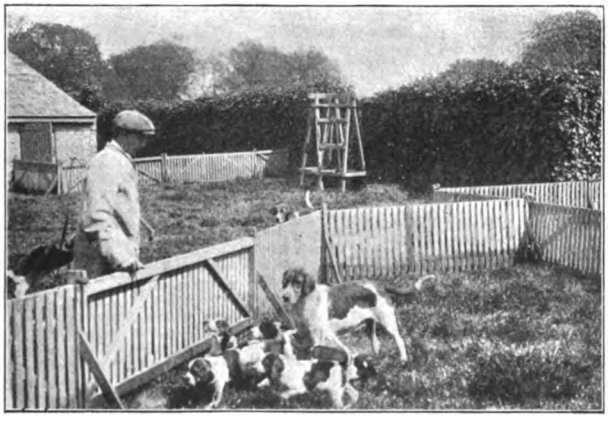
OUR OLD FRIENDS

that the huntsman's troubles are in full swing with a score or more down with distemper. Many a likely prize-winner succumbs to this scourge, which, by the way, according to a note in 'Young' Tom Smith's diary, first broke out in the Brocklesby kennels in 1764, and carried off thirteen couple of hounds. Whence came it, and how did it originate? To the puppy-walker, too, it is an anxious time if he has a real liking for the hound he has sent in; if he has, he will be sure to call now and then to inquire how the patient is progressing, and dire will be his grief if the malady has a fatal ending, not so much because the chance of winning the cup has been taken from him, as from the fact that he will have nothing in the young entry in which to take an especial interest when cub-hunting begins.

Then there will come on the scene those plump little balls of black and white, and dark-brown tan, like young bears, with all their troubles before them, and entirely unconscious, as they

THE PUPPY WE WALKED

tumble about in play, of the anxious thoughts they cause in the brains of the master and his huntsman. If it is a big litter, a foster-mother must be found to take over some of the responsibilities, she either coming to the kennels or having a couple or

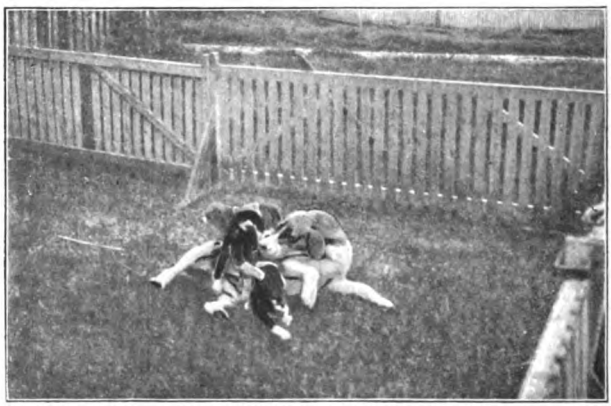


THE HOPES AND FEARS OF MASTER AND HUNTSMAN

so of puppies sent to her. It is a pretty sight to watch the various families in the kennel-yard, each in its own pen, gambolling away the happiest hours of their life, or tearing vigorously at the

piece of flesh which the kennel-man has thrown in for their delectation, while the mothers hold a sort of matrons' meeting hard by.

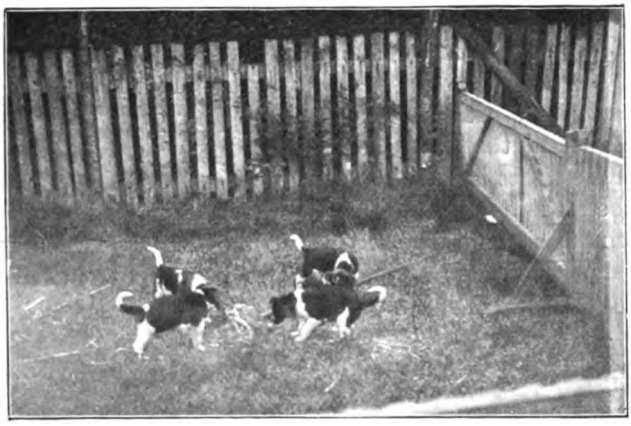
The draft hounds having gone to their new quarters, and the young entry having recovered from the effects of distemper, the pack begins to assume a more level appearance; their coats, which they have not yet finished shedding, are still rough though, and they have not the glossy appearance with which they will turn out on the day of the Puppy Show in August. Many people are of opinion that the puppy judging should take place as soon as the puppies are sent in from walk, so that credit may be given for the care and good feeding of the puppy-walkers. There is something to be said in favour of this, but then again it is unfair



GAMBOLLING ROUND THE STAID, GRAVE-LOOKING MATRON

to those who had late puppies, who with five or six months more in which to grow and furnish will stand a better chance of competing with their fellows. Many, too, are either then down with or sickening for distemper, so that in my humble opinion the autumn, when they have been subject alike to the same skilful care and training, is after all the best time. And while on the subject of the Puppy Show, may I make a suggestion that the prizes should take the form of something suitable for the housewife? After all, it is she who deserves the most credit for a well-walked puppy; for is not the butter account materially reduced by the quantity of new milk which 'young hopeful' consumes? Are not most puppies partial to a new-laid egg, and are there not many young ducklings and chickens whose early demise must be laid at their door, to say nothing of missing boots and

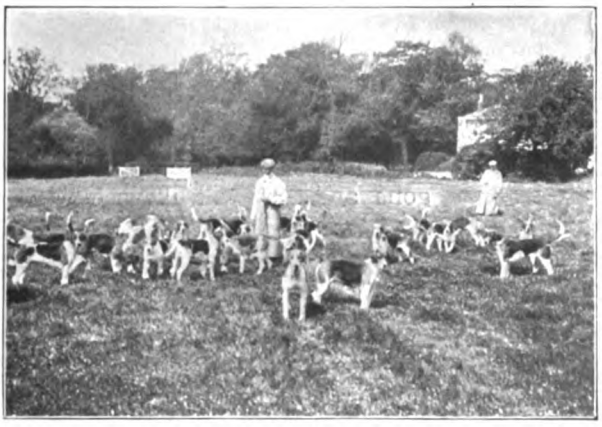
slippers, cloths and brushes, and who knows what else? Would it not, then, ye M.F.H.s, be a great inducement to the lady of the house where the puppy finds quarters to bestow extra care on



TEARING VIGOROUSLY AT THE PIECE OF FLESH

Warrior and Witchcraft if the prizes took the form of a silver teapot, cream jug, sugar basin, or toast rack?

When the time comes for the ears of the young hounds to be trimmed, few visitors are wanted at the kennels, and it is best to



EXERCISING THE HOUNDS

let a fortnight or so elapse for them to get over their troubles before calling to inquire after them. There are some who roll up their eyes in pious horror at the cruelty of this practice, but

if they knew how torn the hounds' ears would otherwise get in covert they would realise the benefit of it. The method of tattooing the litter mark in the ear which has been adopted of late years is, by the way, much preferable to the old-fashioned branding on the side.

Besides the attention which the sick hounds and the baby puppies require, no little time is taken up in exercising the hounds. In most hunts there will be four packs—the old dogs and bitches and the young entry—to be walked out separately two or three times a day; the youngsters will be taken into the park to be steadied at deer, who watch the proceedings with their soft brown eyes, and trot off in the most unconcerned manner as they approach. They have also to be taught that the days

WHO WATCH THE PROCEEDINGS WITH THEIR SOFT BROWN EYES

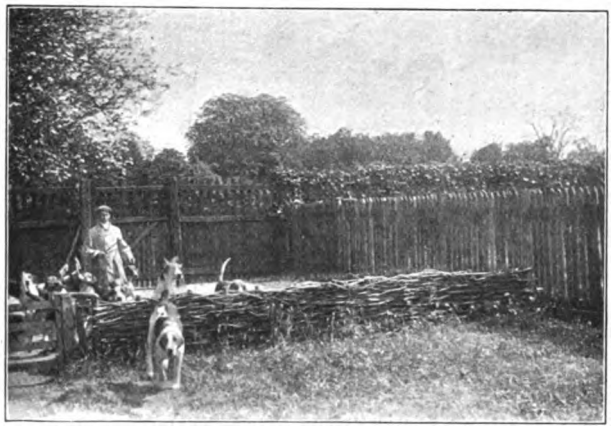
when they might pursue fleet-footed puss or her nimble cousin with impunity are past and gone, and they will likewise be encouraged to lark over the made-up fences in the grass yard. A pretty sight it is to see them top their fences in promising style as they race up and down the enclosure, and particularly gratifying if one's own puppy is prominent.

A very trying period for the young fox-catchers is when they are first introduced to couples. Some soon take to them kindly, while others have a rooted objection to them at all times.

When the young puppies have gone out to quarters the huntsman will pay an occasional visit to see how they are progressing, and this frequently happens when the process of getting the pack fit for cub-hunting has begun, that being accomplished by means of long trots on the road; this is also a good

way of getting the cub-hunters into condition, besides hardening the hounds' feet. What a cheery sound is the 'twang-twang!' of the horn on a summer's morning at breakfast-time, which announces that the huntsman and his lieutenants with the mottled darlings are ready to greet you outside! If one does not yearn to be in the saddle again and riding hard after them, as with heads up and sterns down they run from scent to view, one is not half a sportsman.

Next our thoughts turn to our horses. How have they spent the summer months? Everyone has a pet theory as to the correct way in which hunters should be summered, and where so many methods succeed it is not for me to claim the superiority of one over another. One man will recommend light work in an



LARK OVER THE MADE-UP FENCES IN THE GRASS YARD

easy running dog-cart, while another prefers to see his favourites keep their condition to the accompaniment of the ear-tickling jingle of four-in-hand harness. But something is necessary to justify either method; the past season must have been a light one, with the prospect of an equally easy time to come in the future, and there must be the best of feet and legs.

Another way is to give one's hunters a certain amount of saddle work in the cool of the morning, a liberal allowance of green food and the run of a box; while yet another is to turn them out to grass altogether. My own humble opinion is that a summer's run is the most beneficial, but that several modifications to the last-named scheme are desirable. In my ideal paddock I should have several big shady trees, a stream of good, clear water running over a gravelly bottom, and a row of loose boxes.

My horses should have a feed of corn and be shut up in the boxes each night, and the doors of the boxes should also be left open during the day for shelter from the flies and the sun; and during very inclement weather they should have access to their boxes, with a rack full of hay to nibble at instead of the grass. From personal observation I know how much a horse appreciates a summer's run; he is as eager to get at the young pastures as we are to enjoy the first fruits and vegetables of the season. Instinctively he seeks the cool waters of the running stream which does such incalculable good to his jaded feet and legs, the legacy of a hard hunting season; the daily allowance of corn, together with the exercise which he gives himself, enables him to come up much

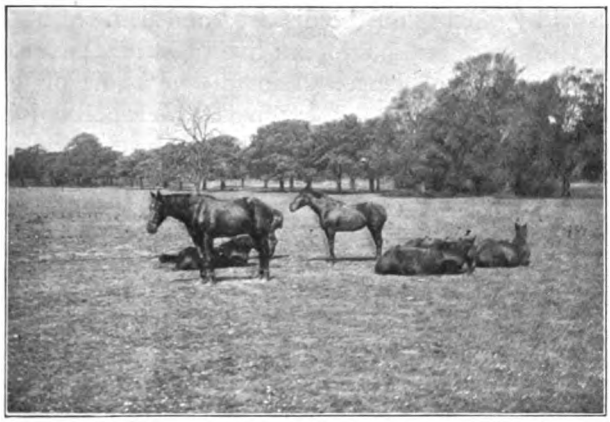
TOP THEIR FENCES IN PROMISING STYLE

fitter than one would expect, and he is all the sooner got ready for the exigencies of another period of fox-chasing.

There are few prettier scenes than that provided by a number of hunters at grass in a suitable paddock. Watch them as they doze lazily in the sun or crop the sweet herbage; see how they revel in a roll or a splashing match in the stream; then suddenly off they go in a body for a gallop that will stretch their limbs and open their pipes. A real holiday it is, and one which our generous equine friends richly deserve.

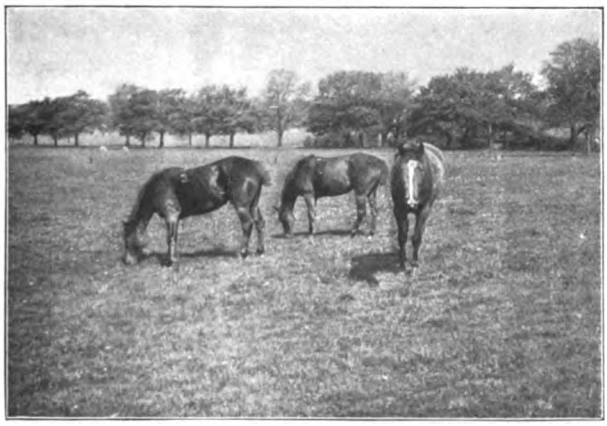
To the shooting man who is only half a sportsman the news that a vixen has laid up near his favourite coverts is anything but welcome. I say the man who is only half a sportsman; but really he who thinks only of his own sport, or it may be of the sum of money that his poulterer will pay him, does not really deserve the term of sportsman at all. At the time of writing I

have two litters of cubs within a quarter of a mile of my house, and have made it my business to study their habits. Now I 'go in' for poultry; yet during the last three years I only know of



THEY DOZE LAZILY IN THE SUN

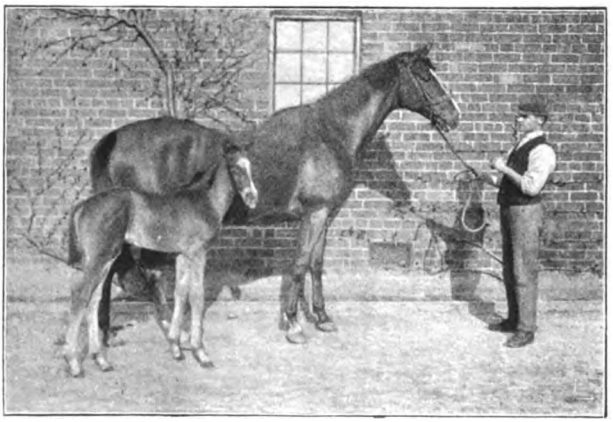
two losses—an old hen who would sit away in a hedge bottom, and a duck who was rather too late in coming off the pond at night. It is very seldom that I have noticed the remains of a fowl in the neighbourhood of the earths, and not once have I



CROP THE SWEET HERBAGE

seen signs that a pheasant or a partridge has formed part of the banquet. Rabbits are the natural food of bold Reynard, and of that there is no doubt if one will but pay periodical visits to the

breeding earths. Rats, mice, moles and beetles also form the food of a fox, but, like a human being, he will not refuse a *bonne bouche* in shape of game if it comes in his way. And small blame to him, say I. Who knows what good the fox does to the shooting man by picking off the diseased and sickly of his fur and feather? That foxes and game can live together the Brocklesby country gives ample evidence. Though the show of long-tails might not satisfy the glutton, a day in Lord Yarborough's woods will generally yield a hundred head of the handsomest of game birds, to say nothing of a few woodcock, a number of hares and rabbits galore; while many a time during the day will a 'tally-ho over!' thrill us to the core. A big landowner in my neighbourhood said that he never saw so many *foxes and partridges* on his



THE GOOD-LOOKING THREE-YEAR-OLD

estate as he did last year. Even the devil is said not to be so black as he is painted, and I don't believe half the crimes that are set down to 'the thief of the world.' Don't I know of turkeys—for whose loss their owner has received compensation—whose plump and unscarred bodies were discovered on a poulterer's showboard; and among other cases that have been trumped up against poor Reynard, the one in which things looked so black against the little red rascal, till the clear print of hobnailed boots in a fowl-house (which the owner had distinctly stated had not been entered by a human being since locking-up time) discounted the evidence of the scattered feathers and the hole scratched under the door?

A litter of cubs at play makes a charming picture, but it is one that is not often seen, for foxes are most suspicious animals,

are easily scared by a slight noise or the sight of a human face, and very little will induce the vixen to move her family to other quarters. I have tried in vain to get a photograph of one of the litters near my house, but though I have come across them often enough when carrying a gun or a walking stick, I have spent many a weary hour, with a camera, in a cramped position near the earth without catching a glimpse of a cub.

By the latter end of June many cubs have taken up their abode in the corn or the least disturbed coverts, and then it is that badger-hunting, a by no means unexciting form of sport to us country folk, may be safely undertaken. In their new homes the cubs will live peacefully and happily till some September morning, when comes a rude awakening; the family party is

THE YOUNG FOX-CATCHER, BRED FROM THE OLD MARE

scattered hither and thither, and when it reassembles it is to mourn the loss of possibly more than one of its members.

Then we hunting-folk, those of us whose visit to 'the sweet shady side of Pall Mall' is but an occasional one, how do we amuse ourselves 'neath summer suns? We all of us have some duties to perform during the day, but our spare time can be occupied most pleasantly and in a manner qualified to keep us in condition for the business of the next hunting season. An old huntsman once said to me, 'When a hunting man can't hunt he should play cricket,' and providing our joints are supple enough, what can a man want more? Hunt cricket matches are particularly enjoyable, and an exchange of visits with the neighbouring packs makes many a pleasant outing. The hounds are sure to come on the scene during the afternoon, and then cricket

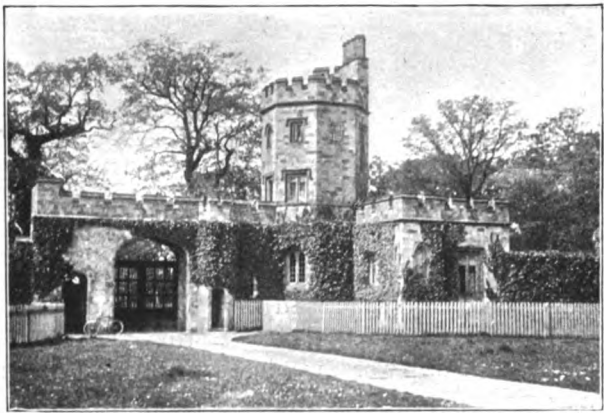
goes to 1,000 to 3 till the friendly criticisms have been got over. If a series of matches can be arranged many of the younger members of the Hunt will be brought together in the field who would probably not meet between the seasons, while a goodly number of the veterans are sure to turn up as spectators, and over a cigar and a pleasant chat cheer heartily for their own side. But do we find stooping more difficult than of yore? are we more blown running a four than we used to be? and does the ball seem a trifle harder and more difficult to hold than a few years ago? Then do we turn to 'the only game,' vie with our contemporaries in driving a long ball, and derive no little gratification and pride from doing the round in one fewer than our

CAMERA ON BACK

previous best. Tennis and croquet we have at hand for him who loves the society of ladies—and what sportsman does not?—and an exchange of social visits does much to keep alive that spirit of hospitality and sport which invariably go hand in hand and which is so inbred in the English sportsman. Our friends will appreciate the make and shape of the good-looking three-year-old, just now going into breaking tackle, and of which we have such great expectations; nor will the good points of the young fox-catcher, bred from the old mare that once carried us so well, escape their notice.

Now that we all bicycle, what more enjoyable than an occasional tour, camera on back, round the country we so love to cross when in pursuit of the flying pack? We all have a picturesque meet or two, no matter what Hunt we belong to, and we

shall find them doubly so 'neath summer suns; and as we gaze across the vale or stand at the covert-side drinking in the delightful sights, sounds and scents of the country, it will be strange indeed if some pleasant recollections of our happy hunting days do not crop up in our minds. Was it not from that very corner that the old rascal departed on that ten-mile journey that proved his last, and when so few of us heard the ringing 'who-whoop' that celebrated his downfall? There it was that Brown jumped the high timber on Bay Robin. Yonder is the very spot where we pounded Jones on his three-hundred-guinea chestnut; and



A PICTURESQUE MEET

that silver stream which looks so inviting for a plunge to-day, do we not remember how very uninviting it looked that morning in January when five of us charged its coffee-coloured torrent abreast, and Robinson got in?

'Tis not for all of us to summer in town, to do Hurlingham, the Row, the Opera, Ascot, Goodwood and Cowes. Some of us have tasted of their delights in bygone years, before rents went down and families increased; while others, perhaps, can snatch a fortnight in which to cram in those pleasures which are all the sweeter because of their rarity.

ACROSS A DESERT OF GRASS

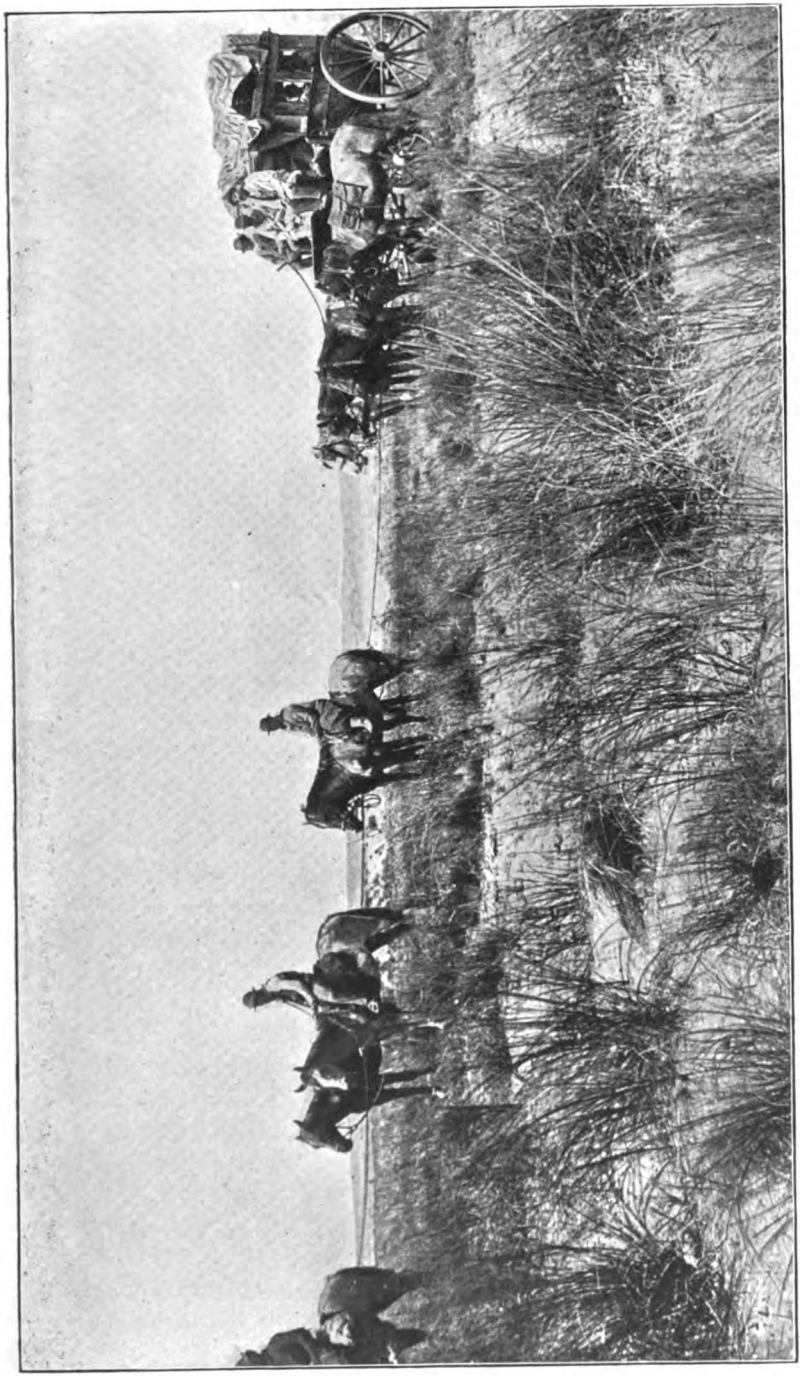
BY S. SCOTT-MONCRIEFF

'SAND, sand, sand, still sand, and only sand, and sand, and sand again'—so the author of 'Eōthen' describes the desert of Egypt. I, with the change of a word, would describe the pampas of South America as grass, grass, grass, still grass, and only grass, and grass, and grass again. To those who know the deserts of golden sand where, in the hollows of the broken ground and on the distant mountains, lie shadows of liquid blue and vivid purple, this flat empty world of grey-green grass, without a rock or hillock to break the completeness of the circling horizon-line, appears to be more of a dreary desert than the Great Sahara itself.

'Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place and let the dry land appear.' I recall the words of the Book of Genesis, for here it would appear we have got no further than the third day of creation.

My horse and I stand, as it were, in the centre of a bare round table covered with a coarse green cloth; an absurd idea strikes me that it would be dangerous to ride too near the edge in case of toppling over; and so marvellously flat it is, I find it more difficult than ever to believe the world is round as an orange.

All is silent. And so silent! A mariner adrift on the wide Atlantic could not feel more forsaken. In this desolation I turn to my dumb companion; he is to me no longer a mere beast of



THE STAGE-COACH CROSSING THE PAMPAS

burden, but has become a human creature like myself. I pat his rough neck and handle him with growing consideration, speaking to him from time to time, grateful if he responds with a cock of his ear or backward glance of his eye. He is so shabby, so lacking in all points of breeding, without doubt in polite society I should be obliged to ignore him; but here, in this unpeopled wilderness, I have discovered that he has a heart of gold, and I cherish him as a brother.

As the climbing sun turns the grey of dawn to cheerful blue, it becomes apparent that this desert is not wholly void of life. Like a sweet bell chiming through the liquid air rings the call of the *martineté*—a species of partridge—while the harsh cry of the *teru-teru* warns all birds and beasts that a stranger is at hand. But it would seem that the animal world has not yet learnt that man is too often an enemy; for the creatures do not fly before me, but slowly turn and offer me a stare, as harmlessly curious as my own. Surely it can only be for companionship that the swallows cling close, seeming to follow for mile upon mile, flitting round as though playing hide-and-seek amongst the horse's legs. So swift is their darting flight I cannot tell if they are always the same birds that escort me, or if they tire and fall away and others take their place. The skunk—a beast to be treated with respect by man and horse, as he can avenge himself for the slightest interference on their part—rising in a leisurely way from one of the ruts that alone mark our road, moves slowly off, his tail erect and stiff from annoyance. Drawing rein, I circle round to show him I have no wish to disturb him on his own camping ground.

Now a spot of blood-red catches the eye. It is a red-breasted bird, bright as a jewel, that sways on a stem of grass.

A troop of South American ostriches barely take the trouble to scuttle out of our way, shaking their plumage and long waving necks, in a little bustle of passing excitement.

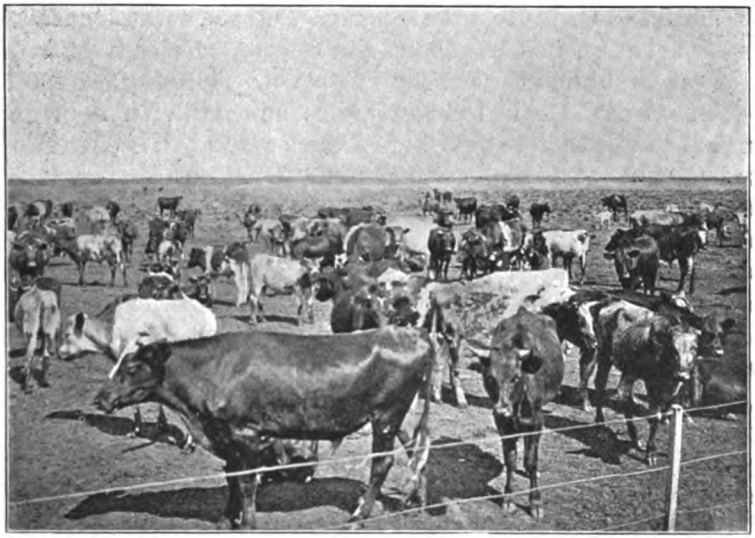
I have discovered in this new world an unforeseen charm. Its newness is a reality in an unexpected sense. Other lands are made familiar to us through books and pictures, while this land is as yet unknown to literature and art. It has a history, it is true, and one chapter is of interest to us; for once Buenos Ayres was in the hands of British troops, and, had affairs been of less overpowering interest in Europe, the chances are that this vast country would have been one of our greatest colonies, and, under a good and strong government, as great and as prosperous as the United States of North America.

Have you ever considered how the books, pictures, photographs, and improving lectures forced upon us from the day we first show interest in a story spoil the pleasure of all future travel? They take the very bloom off the peach. Think of the shock and thrill of delighted wonder the Pyramids would give the traveller who had the good fortune to see them without having ever heard of them. Now the first impression received is but the recognition of old friends seen in every Sunday picture-book, and often described in an overwhelming number of globe-trotters' published records. But here on the pampas I feel like Adam on the first day he spent on this now too well-known earth; the birds and beasts around me are like new creations, I have even to find them names. No one ever told me that there were such creatures as the various antediluvian-like animals that creep through the grass or lie basking in the sun, clothed in armour of delicate make and exquisite colouring, harmless enough it would seem, yet their queer movements and uncouth shape mark them as uncanny objects belonging to a world beyond our ken.

A distant gleam of water makes me turn from the track to find a shallow pond of rain-water collected in a slight depression of the ground. Some days ago a storm swept across the pampas, bringing in its wake a flight of many varieties of birds, never to be seen in dry weather, when no water is to be found except by digging below the surface of the ground. Some of these birds that follow the rain-clouds have lingered here by this water-pool. As I ride through the long grasses that have sprung up in the damp soil, a number of flamingoes, disturbed, rise like a flame, and flash up to the blue, their scarlet plumage changing to softest rose as they mount higher and higher. Still more perfect in its beauty is a swan with jet-black neck and body of purest white. It floats with stately grace on the silver water, ignoring the presence of man and horse, though it is possible that it has never before come across such objects.

Riding on and on from hour to hour, bathed in hot sunshine, the air more invigorating than can be dreamed of by those who have never breathed aught but the damp heavy atmosphere of our overcrowded island, the ear undisturbed by all but harmonious sounds that but show how perfect is the silence, eye and brain rested by the absence of colour and form—a great tranquillity enters into my soul. I fall to wondering why I, like the mass of mankind, prefer to dwell in the crowded centres of this world's life, instead of in quiet solitudes where peace and still beauty are to be found. Is the interest we seek in politics, art, and the

affairs of other men worth the labour we bestow upon them? Are the manifold possessions that in civilised life accumulate about our dwellings worth the trouble they entail? Why not build a lodge in the wilderness and—but here my reverie was broken and my thoughts sent flying. An object in the far distance, upon which my eye had unconsciously been dwelling, now took shape, and I saw it was the inn where my horse and I were to rest and feed. It required no touch of the spur to urge him on. With a common impulse we hurried to reach this oasis in the wilderness—the kindly haunt of mankind in an empty world. Where now were my longings for solitude and quiet? And, for



CATTLE ON THE PAMPAS

all our speed, this half-hour of the journey was the longest we had yet known, so impatient were we to be with our kind once more.

Of all the caravanseries designed to meet the wants of needy travellers, none could prove more unattractive than a *pulperia* on the pampas. The one I now arrived at was, like all its kind, drinking-bar, post-office and store, and therefore the centre of gossip as well as business for many leagues round. The Italian who ran it had named it 'Bella Italia.' At first the sentiment of the thing, accentuated by its inappropriateness, touched me with some kindly tenderness; before I departed the only sentiment left to me was one of disgust, tempting me to tear down the placard

that bore so deceptive a title. Truly there was nothing of beautiful Italy to be found in that home of disorder, dirt and want; yet the sourness of the wine, the heavy odour of garlic, and the swarming insects of many varieties, recalled Italy in its least pleasing aspect, and no doubt to many an emigrant from its shores would be redolent of fond memories.

Slipping from my saddle, with the gait of a sailor on shore, I staggered to the door and was met by a very indifferent landlord. With no enthusiasm he offered to supply me with anything I might wish for. But on questioning him I discovered that by chance, as he explained, that day he happened to have no meat, soup, bread, or eggs, or indeed anything one is in the habit of eating. While I tried, with the little Spanish I knew, to find out what there was to be had, my host disappeared, to return behind a blue-eyed, frank-faced Englishman. What sight more delightful to look upon? He introduced me to him with an impressive air as if to a potentate. We were friends at a glance, and at a word we agreed to breakfast together. Mine host was no longer indifferent; he was Don Eduardo's humble servant, emptying the shelves of his store to cover our table. Tins of herring, Huntley and Palmer's biscuits, Crosse and Blackwell's jams—the meal was hardly satisfying, and was certainly unwholesome from its variety. Don Eduardo sternly refused to drink coffee which we were told was as if from Paris, and ordered a pot of tea. This made a new man of me. Then stretched on a bedstead—one stood in each corner of the otherwise almost empty room—enjoying a cigarette, my companion told me stories of the country and its people, until, drowsy with the heat, we fell asleep.

One tale I repeat as he told it to me:

'Last week,' he said, 'Don Pedro—called the black fox because he was so clever—was murdered here. Two men, in the store there, were quarrelling over some silly affair. Don Pedro tried to separate them. As he stepped between them one drew his knife and stabbed him under the shoulder. He was dead in two or three minutes; never said a word or made a sign. Well, on Thursday night they were *velando* or waking him. The Gauchos have learnt what a wake is from the Irish who swarm over the country. I rode over to see the last of the old chap. Generally a wake is more or less of a jollification, but on this occasion there was no fun going because there was real sorrow. Old Pedro was a man of the right sort whose death was a loss to the whole *partido*. I can tell you it was a most impressive sight; he was laid out on a table in this very room, with candles burning

round him and his *poncho* wrapped about him. Lying there dead, he looked as if he slept. He was a grandly made man with a fine face. His *peones*—he had a band of six or eight men who worked for him and swore by him. His business was to travel with cattle; he would take a herd across the country, being a month on the road, and never lose a single one. Well, there were his men sitting round the room, some crying bitterly, and they watched their old mate for twenty-four hours without sleep. The next day they took him to a town forty miles from here, where there is a priest and consecrated ground, and buried him.

THE GAUCHO AT HOME

The Gauchos know as little about religion as they know of a London theatre, but when it comes to dying they like to have a priest. I saw them go past in the early dawn, some twenty men riding round a waggon on which lay all that is left of the best rider I ever saw. Many a league these fellows have travelled with him, following the cattle from sunrise to sunset, and watching them all through the night. They were sad enough on that last journey with their old boss laid low. I can tell you I felt cut up; the old chap was a friend of mine and would do anything I asked him. He was true as steel to the man he served; as to the

peones, they were his slaves. Well, he was a Gaucho of the old type—you do not see many of his make nowadays. I tell you that is a man worthy of respect. I shall not be sorry if I leave as good a record behind me. Education? Why, he had no use for education! He knew more and was wiser than most educated men in his walk in life. He did flourish a note-book at times and put marks in it. And I have seen him look as if he were deep in a newspaper, but he held it upside down. You see he did not wish it to be said that he could not read. Caramba! it was a beastly murder, that's what it was.'

'What of the murderer?' I asked. 'I hope he is to be hanged'

'Hanged! Why, don't you know in this enlightened land they are too civilised and too humane to hang any man?'

It was time to take the road again, and very unwillingly I parted from my chance friend, whose way was not mine.

The heat was now great as a north wind blew in gusts, driving fine dust in our faces, while from the parched earth the heat radiated as fiercely as from the sun itself. The *oscuro*—as my horse was called, from its cloudy colour—was but little perturbed and galloped along as steadily as a rocking-horse and as patiently as any ass. The sun, an angry red ball of flame, was drawing near the horizon when I caught sight of a long line of green cloud that I rightly guessed must be the woods of Santa Rosa.

What a relief it was to at last pass into the shade of great willows, whose branches sweeping to the ground almost choked the path that led up to the house, effectually keeping out the sun and the dust-laden wind! Riding into the *patio*, a pack of dogs received me uproariously, bringing our host and his companions from all directions with kindly welcomes. With the true hospitality of his country, he put all his belongings at my disposal; and I thankfully borrowed from his wardrobe, as my baggage, still on the road, was not likely to be delivered for some days. Cooled and refreshed, with the help of several buckets of water drawn from the depth of the well, with much appreciation I sat down to a table spread with all that was wanting at the *pulperia*. Roast lamb, turkey, several kinds of vegetables and fruits, home-made bread and creamy butter, with fragrant coffee and cigarettes in the verandah to wind up with—not a bad *menu* to find in the wilds.

Although Santa Rosa was built less than thirty years ago, it already represented the past and a forgotten order of things. The second story of the central part of the house formed a *mirador* or watch tower, now only serving as a useful look-out. Here hung

the bell rung at stated intervals to call the *peones* home to meals or waken them up from *siesta* to return to work. A Union Jack flying high served as a signal to those who were beyond sound of the bell. The windows in the older portion were barred with iron gratings and the walls loopholed, forming in these peaceful days convenient storing places for small odds and ends. Santa Rosa was built in the time when Indians still wandered over the province of Buenos Ayres, and an *estancia*, like a border peel, had to be ever on guard against sudden attacks, serving as a fort for the surrounding peasants with their more valuable flocks and herds. The horror with which the Gauchos still speak of

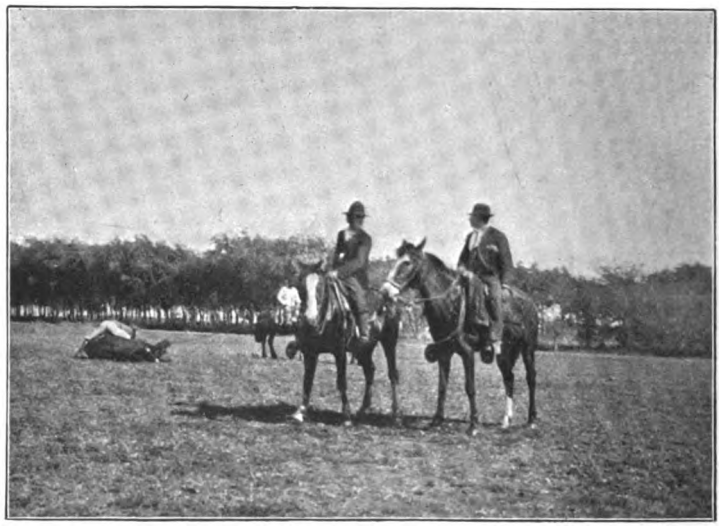
STACKING ALFALFA

these Indians, and the absence of any relics of their civilisation, lead one to suppose that they were a bloodthirsty race of the very lowest human type. One sees in the Gauchos, however, many traces of Indian as well as of Spanish descent, and many words in daily use on an *estancia* are derived from their language.

The house itself is a rambling homely-looking building; rooms have been added as required with no regard to the laws of architecture. Built of home-made brick, some of the walls are covered with white plaster, others are left in the rough; some of the roofs are of red tiles, some are thatched with dried grass, while the latest addition is covered with corrugated iron. The rooms are paved with fine red tiles, and the walls are washed in

pale colours. In the chief apartments the ceilings are lined with white pine or painted wood.

The original house consists of a large central hall, well protected from the heat of the sun by the four rooms that are built round it; it is only lit through their doorways, keeping it cool and dark, and therefore free from flies, the greatest plague of one's life during summer in Argentina. In the hall there is a wide open hearth where in winter a great fire roars for an hour or two every evening, when songs are sung and stories told and many a pipe smoked. While out of doors an icy wind sweeps from the



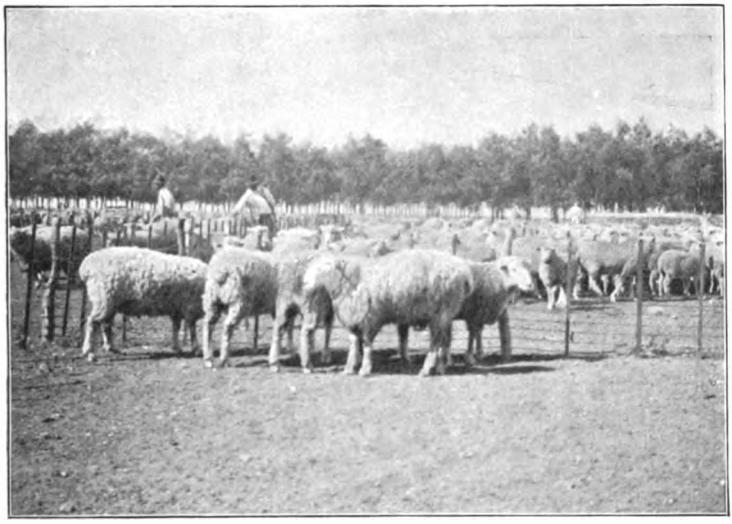
BULL LASSOED PREPARATORY TO BRANDING

snowy plains of Patagonia, or a keen frost whitens the grass, to vanish at the touch of the sun in the morning.

I found myself lingering from week to week, and from month to month, with my kindly friends at Santa Rosa. One fails to reckon the passing of time when only marked by the sun and the seasons. It might be called a monotonous life, yet it never seemed dull. Every day a neighbour turned up to post his letters or fetch them, to meet a friend or transact some business. For Santa Rosa was honoured by a weekly call from *la galera*, the stage coach that brought from town a heavy mail, the parcel post, and sometimes a traveller. The return journey on the following week was hardly so interesting.

Every night at sundown a large party gathered round the

dinner table. It is true, at times, to an outsider, the conversation was as wearisome as it always is when experts talk nothing but shop hardly intelligible to the uninitiated. I wearied of the wonderful *alfalfa* crop that grew greener and greener as the heat and the drought increased, and that ever was being cut, dried, or sown. Cattle, at least in the open, afforded some excitement when the unruly member of the herd would be picked out by the lasso, with its almost living dexterity, and bound as if with fetters of steel, then thrown, with broken pride, helpless on the ground. But sheep to me were unutterably uninteresting, slow and stupid in their movements, and only pathetically helpless in the *corrál*.



SHEEP YARDS, SANTA ROSA

Horses, however, were the mainstay of our talk; what, indeed, would we be without them?—helpless as a seaman without a ship. Each man has his favourite and talks of it, without mercy to his listener, as a lover does of his lady. If you wish to rouse a man to wrath, if everything else fails, say but a word of contempt for his mount, and it is done. But it is only here and there that one meets an Englishman who comes near the Gaucho in his knowledge of horses and their ways. He knows every horse he has met with individually, and recognises it as we would recognise a man on seeing it again; yet horses are more common on the pampas than men.

A *corrál* alongside the house was to me as entertaining as a

circus, although too often the rough treatment of the horses caused me to interfere and hopelessly try to teach the *peones* who broke them in that mercy was more effectual than brutality. The Gaucho's one idea of breaking in a horse is to teach it its helplessness in the hands of its master, and too often this is done by breaking its spirit completely.

The day on which the *domador*—the professional rider—first mounts the young colts is a day of excitement on the *estancia*. Everyone leaves his work and joins the ring of spectators to watch the *domador* attempt to hold his own in the saddle; to jeer if he is thrown, and murmur applause when, tossed like a ball from the saddle, he again lands in his seat.

SADDLING AN UNBROKEN COLT

The young horse has been lassoed, bound, handled, and saddled before this, and has learnt to submit, but when he first feels the weight of a man on his back, he makes one more desperate bid for freedom. Does he know that once mounted he is the slave of his master? Sometimes he plunges forwards and tears over the plain in a mad gallop, soon to sink exhausted under the unaccustomed weight; the more vicious animal, wrenching and twisting his whole body, springs high in the air with his four feet off the ground, his back arched like an angry cat, his head and tail hanging. Few men can stand the force of that fearful spring, but the trained *domador* rises and falls in his saddle over and over again, until the poor beast drops from

exhaustion. But we talked of other things besides cattle and horses round our dinner table; and nowhere could better company be found. Some dozen men would gather there—the eldest not more than forty, the youngest fresh from a public school—and all there for the one reason that there was no room for them in England. None of them had capital, but all were strong and superbly healthy, and had received the free gift from the pampas of the highest of spirits—for who can be downcast and breathe their air? There were men of culture among them who found time to read and think in the midst of a hard-working life. There were men who toiled without ceasing, and were ambitious of rising in time to be owners, or *mayor-domos*, of vast tracts of land and numberless flocks. The majority were, perhaps, lads who as yet were content to take life easily, earning enough to keep themselves and a horse or two, with something over to spend on a trip home, or, if that is beyond their means, on a visit to Buenos Ayres, where at the theatre and in restaurants their savings are soon lost. One does come across the hopeless ne'er-do-weel, the black sheep, who having disgraced himself has been shipped to this far-away land, where he is more certain than at home to sink into the very lowest depths.

THE COLT BEGINS TO BUCK

Of the many who go out to a new land full of high hopes, only a few rise to the top of the ladder of fortune, and are able to return to enjoy life in the Old World with the help of great wealth. For it is to be remembered that to succeed in a new country greater ability and greater force of character are required than serve to carry a man successfully along the beaten tracks of conventional life in old civilisations.

THE DOMADOR RISES AND FALLS IN THE SADDLE

As the season advances the hot winds and dust-storms give place to the cool days of autumn, when the land grows green once more, as if under the touch of a second spring. I now discover that the greatest charm of the *estancia* of Santa Rosa lies in its garden, that encroaches on every side in a wilderness of flowers and fruit trees and great stretches of vegetables, throwing its trailing vines about the iron bars that fortify the windows, and shutting out the monotonous grassy desert from our sight with a fragrant screen of *buenas noches* and a tangle of roses.

With the frosts of winter the pampas borrow a strange and mysterious beauty. At the hour when the white mists of the dawn melt beneath the growing heat of the sun, before one stretches a great sea with rolling breakers falling on a level shore; here and there floats an island decked with palm-trees and minarets; for this strange phantasy would seem to change the commonplace West into some old-world Eastern land. This picture—Nature's handiwork—gives the keenest pleasure in relieving for a time the bare monotony of the empty landscape. I never tired of chasing the flying vision which the swiftest horse failed to overtake—the waves ever broke a few yards ahead of us, the islands ever lay on the verge of the far horizon; like hopes drawn by the pen of fancy that ever lie before us but are never within our grasp.

The mirage played a still more curious trick when it caused a neighbouring *estancia*, hidden from our sight by the natural dip of the land, to be brought within the level of our vision, floating in the air like a picture flung on a sheet by a magic-lantern.

As the winter days of June grew shorter and shorter and colder—yet never too cold to enjoy life out of doors warmed by the glorious sun—I found I must say good-bye to my many friends—Gauchos, Basques and Italians, as well as my own countrymen. Once again the *oscuro* and I set out to cross the desert of grass to meet the railway that leads one to Buenos Ayres and civilisation.

From the windows of the flying carriage I looked my last on the pampas. Herds of cattle, flocks of sheep, troops of horses, with now and then a stoppage at a wayside station which sometimes had a few houses gathered round it; more seldom at a larger town without a feature of beauty and interest about it.

As the train sped on and on across an empty landscape, I fell to dreaming of the changes that are to come, when the pampas will be covered with prosperous villages, surrounded with fields rich in golden grain, and pastures filled with flocks and herds,

with here and there a great man's dwelling standing in orchards and glowing gardens. And, in a wealthy and peaceful community, great cities, in course of time, will grow up, beautified by art and industry. And this fair home is waiting to be made by the surplus millions who are now struggling for their daily bread in overcrowded Europe.

THE SHIP OF THE PAMPAS

HOW WE WON OUR MATCH

BY W. J. FORD

Our village was quite a good village. It was a model of what a good village should be: plenty of everything and too much of nothing. We had our forge, our carpenter, and our shop, which, being a sort of *omnium gatherum*, exactly filled up all our desires, save those which the butcher and the inn supplied. Of course we were not very exhaustive in our requirements, and did not expect 'the shop' to provide us with modern millinery or 'table delicacies,' and we were, perhaps, in the light of recent revelations, lucky in our simplicity. Our inn was certainly our pride; it was most correctly embosomed in a climbing rose which rejoiced the hearts of residents and passers-by; its nut-brown ale and 'cool October' were unrivalled; and its gin, the only spirit that was asked for with regularity, was the joy of those who could afford it. Outside the door and on either side of it were benches duly reserved by immemorial custom for the fathers of the village, who assembled with great regularity, inside or outside, according to the weather, to discuss the affairs of the township or the less important interests of the nation. Our church had once been painted by a real artist whose pictures were never exhibited anywhere, and its pulpit was just large enough to hold our vicar, a worthy old gentleman who interfered with nothing, not even with the placid slumber that overcometh him who hath dined plenteously on beef and plum-pudding, or ever the clock hath struck two. In short, we were a perfect type of repose and unprogress, self-satisfaction and un-up-to-datedness. Our sole

anxieties were divided between the forwardness of Farmer Giles's mangolds and the progress of Gaffer Stumps's piglets.

It was death and a craze that perturbed our calm; the death was the death of the vicar, and the craze was the craze of the 'bike;' the former proved the foundation of our cricket club, the latter caused a revolution in our inn. I don't mean by 'a revolution' that our landlord was prosecuted for refusing to supply lunch to the bloomer-clad, or that there was a strike of 'the staff;' but new times brought new manners, and our old-fashioned beverages were supplanted by gins-and-ginger-beers, shandy-gaffs, and the like, while a new and smart barmaid was imported as absolutely essential to a smart inn on a popular road. Our landlord, too, blossomed out, got tips about the Lincolnshire Handicap and Aston Villa, and was actually reported to have won 'five-and-twenty pound!' over the result of a sparring match at the N.S.C. We were clearly getting up to date, and the advent of the new vicar and the consequent foundation of our cricket club proved the fact.

The new vicar arrived with a large reputation as a cricketer; he was reported to have played for Oxford, though later investigations proved that he had played once for his college, when several members of the first eleven were in 'The Schools;' but as we only knew of two colleges, Oxford College and Cambridge College, we regarded the newcomer as a 'blue,' and marvelled that he never wore the colour. Still, like other good men and good enthusiasts, he did much for the game without being a great performer, and he can boast of being the founder of the Slackborough C.C. He called a meeting in the school-room, induced the local magnates to attend, harangued the assembly in touching terms, and secured promises of support—ay, and more than promises—that enabled the S.C.C. to commence existence on a sound financial basis. He found a staunch ally in, of all people, Mr. Grogsby, the host of the 'Red Cow,' whose motives may have been actuated by the possibilities of cricket lunches. But, whatever the cause, there was the cash, and we elected members, drew up a thrilling code of rules, and declared that the village green was the most appropriate, as well as the cheapest, scene of action; and the centre of that pleasant spot was consequently rolled with rollers, rammed with rammers, fenced with fences, and watered with water-carts—all lent by good-hearted neighbours—till it can hardly have known itself. The out-fielding certainly left something to be desired, as long-off and long-on had to shamble after the ball as best they could through a wilderness

of old kettles, potsherds, goose feathers, and brickbats; but the pitch, to say nothing of the practice-wickets close to the duck-pond, was really quite satisfactory, especially to the bowlers. Visiting batsmen, however, were, I am bound to say, unreasonably critical, while the fieldsmen generally had something rude to say about the potsherds and kettles. Still we forged ahead a little during our first year, and actually won a match against a neighbouring village, our second season showing quite an improvement and encouraging us to fly at higher game as talent developed. The parson got back to his Oxford form, such as it was; the blacksmith, who generally stood umpire 'for our side' —very much 'for our side'—had two sons who turned out to be above the average of the village player, their father himself being persuaded to play occasionally as a fast under-hand bowler of erratic tendencies; he may never have heard the story of 'Here be the parson, Bill; bowl he in the stummuck,' which Bill did, and disabled the holy man for the day; but our man of forges and anvils had been known to do such deeds. We also recruited a long, slogging gamekeeper with a kindly master, two or three sons of the surrounding farmers, and the squire's son-and-heir, who wore magnificent blazers and got very few runs. In the holidays we could pick up a few public-school boys, but during the close season for education we had to fill up with any one who didn't mind playing in a waistcoat and slipping about in black boots. Grogsby, junior,—son of our Boniface—luckily developed *some* talent for wicket-keeping and a great deal of talent for appealing, and as he and the blacksmith's sons were great friends, the blacksmith's sons' papa took care that the bulk of his and the bowlers' appeals did not vanish into thin air.

Thus by our third season we had quite a decent village team; it would hardly have reached the 'Old Buffer's' ideal, but it was a passable side with some varieties—strange varieties—of bowlers, who managed to get people out by hook or by crook, or by the umpire; and this, combined with some sure catching and useful if unscientific batting, made us rather formidable opponents to the smaller fry of the surrounding district. Hence we aspired to greater things; regardless of consequences we challenged the neighbouring market-town to mortal combat, and actually scrambled home winners by a few runs. It was a dreadful fluke, of course, but we found the market-town cricket ground an easier place to score on than our own wicket, pimpled over with stray plantains, while our outfields revelled in the absence of potsherds and brickbats. Our opponents were very savage; they

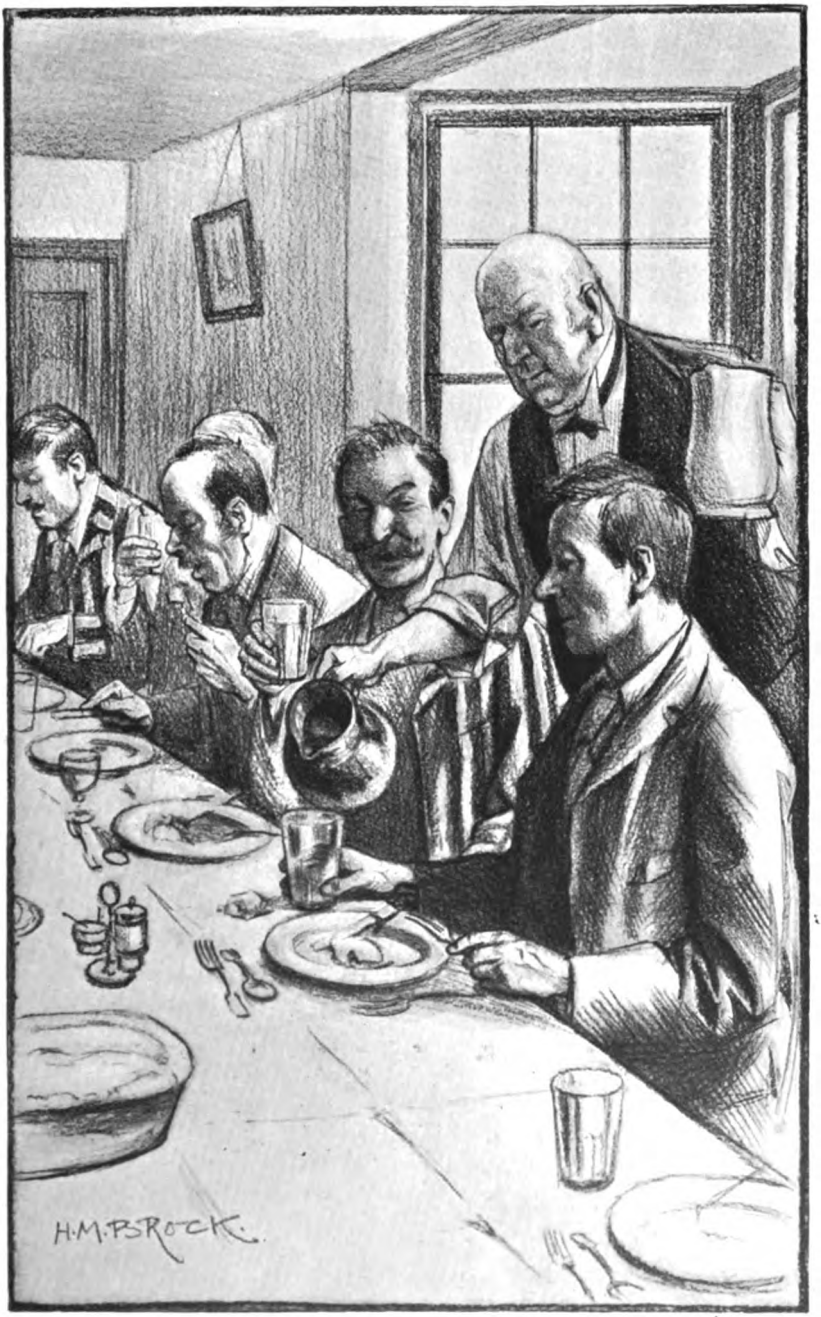
grumbled at the umpires, ours in particular; they growled anathemas on our 'beastly luck'—we had had about four-fifths of all the luck that was knocking about; they said something nasty as to the fairness of the blacksmith's junior bairn's delivery; and finally they vowed unmitigated vengeance, though this only reached our ears by a side wind. Still, the nod was as good as a wink, and as the return match was due in a month—the match was only arranged on the spur of the moment, the wounded pride of the market-towners alone securing us the favour of a second trial—we began in county fashion to beat up recruits in good time. Two young Etonians, home for the holidays, took the places of two of the blackbooted; the parson got a friend who was 'up' for the M.C.C., and consequently in our eyes a shining light, though he was not 'brought forward as a cricketer,' to stay with him, and we finally decided to enlist the blacksmith, Mr. Grogsby of the 'Red Cow' kindly consenting to act as umpire instead of superintending the luncheon arrangements. In his hands we felt sure that ample justice would be done to Grogsby junior's 'How's that?'

The match was clearly to be the event of the season, for Mr. Grogsby, whose business frequently called him to the market-town, reported great activity in cricket circles there, though the discussion of this particular match generally closed abruptly when he entered the bar-parlour of 'The Jolly Cricketers.' Still he had heard dark rumours of a 'real good whopping,' 'strongest side we've put in the field for years,' 'breaks back half a yard,' and the like. We also elicited from Mr. G. that he had taken the opportunity of investing a little money at the odds of 3 to 1 against us, the said odds being freely laid, and as freely taken by our supporter. Unfortunately he had forgottten the existence of Law 51, and we had to break it to him gently that the taking of threes to one hopelessly disqualified him as an umpire, and that his interest in the match must consequently be confined to watching the game, serving lunch, and dispensing agreeable fluids. Mr. Grogsby, thoughtful for a moment, seemed in no way disconcerted at this redistribution of functions.

Well, the important day arrived and found all the accessories in an advanced state of preparation. The screens were in place behind the wickets, and if they were of an 'extrumpery' kind, as the blacksmith described them, they were quite practical; we had a ladies' tent, hired at great expense; some beautiful calico flags run up by the sewing machines of some female admirers;

and quite a respectable collection of benches, of a more or less rickety nature. Lunch was to be taken in the *salon* of the 'Red Cow,' at which engaging hostelry the enemy was to dress. The enemy arrived in good time—that is, their brake drove up at 11.30, the time fixed for pitching the stumps—and by noon the first operation took place. It was quite simple; the parson, knowing that the home captain tossed and the visiting captain called, flung half-a-crown into the air. 'Tails!' cried the enemy, but the head came forth uppermost. 'Then we'll go in,' said the parson, and the market-towners filed out on to the green not uncheerfully. They wore indeed the sort of expression that hinted that the winning of the toss was immaterial, that the result was a foregone conclusion, and that some of our money might eventually find its way to our local metropolis; for Mr. Grogsby had, we found out, not only invested some of his own capital, but had also executed a few commissions for others at remunerative odds. Most of our opponents were well known to us, but there were two strange faces in their ranks, and some pains were taken to inform us that the fair, strapping young fellow with the light moustache was the doctor's assistant, newly arrived from London, and that the shorter, darker man in the blue cap was the new clerk in the lawyer's office. We recalled later on that not only were these new-comers invited to 'open the attack,' as the sporting papers say, but that they also touched their caps on the smallest provocation and said 'Sir' whenever they were addressed. However, they were very pleasant and bowled splendidly, and it was not till next market-day that the fact was revealed that they were two professionals, on the edge of the county eleven, who had been especially chartered for the purpose of our demolition.

To deal with the inmost details of the match is not given to my humble pen. Suffice it to say that, in one brief hour and a half all our ten wickets had fallen for as few as 85 runs, to which the parson had contributed a dozen, and his friend seventeen, while the two Eton boys had launched out pluckily and luckily—they were nowhere near the light-blue eleven—and had actually added 22 for the eighth wicket. The two strangers had shown themselves to be most capable bowlers, and had also scored 20 runs without the loss of a wicket when we retired to the 'Red Cow' for luncheon. Our side was clearly in 'Queer Street,' for never during that quarter of an hour had our bowlers shown the slightest sign of being able to defeat the batsmen. Mr. Grogsby, however, seemed in no way despondent and cheered, or tried to cheer, us

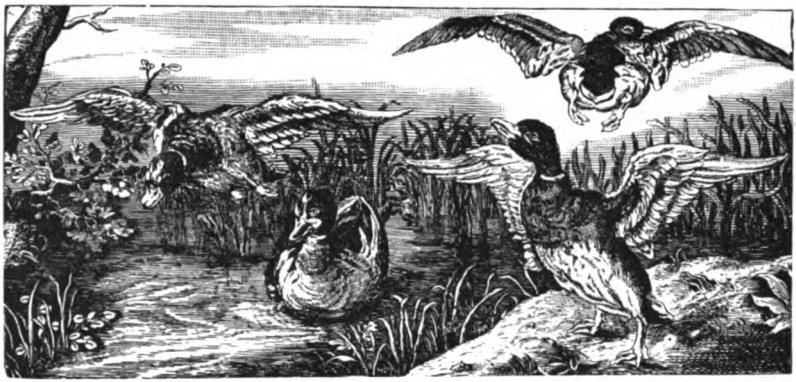


DISPENSED WITH HIS OWN BRAWNY HAND THE BEER AND SHANDY-GAFF

all with the moral sentiment that 'lunch was always in favour of the bowlers.' It certainly was an excellent lunch, of the usual solid kind, and our worthy host himself dispensed with his own brawny hand the beer and shandy-gaff that were included in the regulation fee. Our opponents, as men well pleased with themselves, were charmed with everything—the wicket, the day, the lunch, and especially the shandy-gaff, which they declared was the most delightful compound they had ever tasted; indeed, so exhilarated were they that they actually ventured to smoke some of Mr. Grogsby's special 'Pomposos,' provided gratis—a brand which the hardest-headed of us who knew them would only tackle under special conditions of time and health. As we filed forth after depositing our half-crowns on the lower of the two plates held out by Mr. G., we were somewhat surprised to perceive a certain unnatural exaltation in our opponents' gait: what could it be? They certainly had not exceeded at lunch, though equally certainly they had talked rather loudly over the plum tart, and they had all stuck to the good old-fashioned malt fluids; yet—there could be no mistake about it—some of them *were* a little excited and noisy, and just a hint variable in their walk. Probably it was the result of smoking 'Pomposos' and walking into the hot sunshine, an effect that would soon wear off. However, the effect did not wear off soon enough to enable them to win the match, for 48 runs were all they could add to their ante-lunch nest-egg of twenty; and when it became their turn to take the field again, even the gentlemanly young fellows who touched their caps and said 'Sir' were as harmless as bowlers as the fieldsmen were as fieldsmen, and we actually scored over 150 runs in our second innings, which made us safe from defeat. The tea which our thoughtful ladies had kindly provided proved to be a most acceptable interlude, and it was reckoned that even Mr. Tony Weller himself might have been staggered at the amount which our opponents consumed, but which seemed to have a good effect on their cricket, for when the stumps were pulled up it was quite patent that another three-quarters of an hour might have reversed the result of the first innings. However, we had won, and there was no lack of heartiness in the cheers with which we bade them 'good-night!'

The next afternoon—it was Sunday—I dropped in to see Mr. Grogsby as a friend, and our conversation naturally turned upon the match. Mr. G. confessed to having won nearly 20*l.* in 'long shots,' his more intimate friends being also 'a bit to the good.' I played with the subject for a short time, for I saw from the old

gentleman's semi-apoplectic chuckles—another reminiscence of Tony Weller—that a large confidence was about to be reposed in me. At last the mountain gave forth its mouse, in something like the following form: 'You're a gentleman, Mr. Blank, and won't give me away, but those fellows was that cocky that took down they had to be; so I snaps up their long odds and settles down to think. Now, Mr. Blank, did you ever taste shandy-gaff or beer with gin in it? No? Then don't try it, if you wants your head to be perfectly clear. Did you ever smoke a cigar, not to say a "Pomposo," as had been soaked in rum for twenty-four hours? No? Then don't! Some of their side hadn't never done so, and when it comed to cricket, seemed to me there were summat wrong with their play.' So this was the secret of our success! The wily host, equally bent on winning the match and the odds, had provided two jugs containing compounds which differed only in the addition—the liberal addition—of gin, and from one of these our men were supplied on demand, from the other the market-towners. Likewise were there two distinct brands of 'Pomposos.'



A HAUNT OF THE CANADA GOOSE

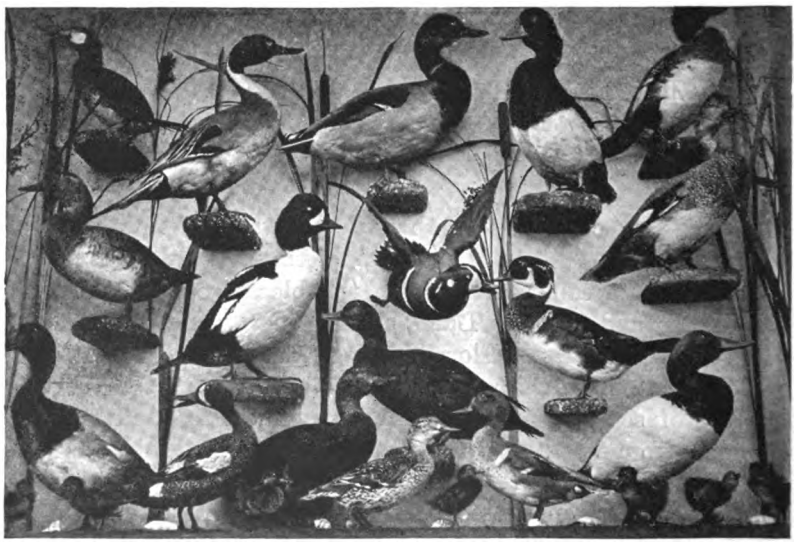
BY ARTHUR P. SILVER

WHEN the first cool blasts of the autumn wind give warning of the approach of winter with its icy fetters, a marvellous stream of feathered life sallies forth from the bleak, rock-bound fiords of Labrador and Baffin's Land, setting southwards towards the more congenial coasts of Florida and the Carolinas. This stream, composed mainly of immense flights of eiders and several varieties of scoters, passes in the early morning and the late afternoon from headland to headland of the Atlantic seaboard, pausing during the mid hours of the day, to become a dark border of feathers on the edge of the ocean. An uninterrupted line of several miles may often be met with rising and falling, diving and disporting, on the long rollers rushing to the shore over sunken ledges, peopled with innumerable shellfish. The spectator is astounded to observe, day after day for several weeks, countless flocks sweeping past in rapid succession, low over the water, each moving in regular line, as if animated by one mind, defiling past as if the whole grand army of sea-fowl were having a field-day. From many a rocky ledge and tossing boat flash after flash salutes their ranks from long ducking guns with queer buccaneer stocks held by hardy fishermen in the intervals of fishing.

Simultaneously there is another migration going on of nobler wild fowl, brant and geese, vegetarian feeders, void of the fishy flavour of their shellfish-eating cousins, hence prized by the sportsman and epicure.

These also come from the regions of the polar bear and ice-

berg, from breeding places on quaking bogs and inland peat beds, where they have reared their young amid the wild solitudes which only the frigid zone affords. They differ from the fish eaters in that they take a lofty plane of flight, and a direct cross-country course, not following the coast-line. Most wing their way direct to the sunny savannahs of the South, but some call occasional halts for a bivouac at favourite feeding places on their route; becoming objects of hot pursuit on the Atlantic bays, where they are shot at from 'sink boxes' over decoys; on the stubble of Nebraska cornfields, where they are destroyed from the



A MARVELLOUS STREAM OF FEATHERED LIFE

ambush of sandpits; and on the sand-bars of the Mississippi, where they are stalked from the stealthy scull-boat.

They will run the same gauntlet of foes when on their return voyage in the spring; over plains and mountains still clad in snow; over ice-bound lakes and rivers, an imperious instinct of making their breeding haunts inaccessible to enemies drives them on clanging pinions back to the stern North again; their welcome 'ah-hunk' saluting the ear, the first announcement of the finish of winter's reign, and their thin aërial line the first prophecy of the advent of spring days to the Canadians.

So fond are these fowls of the Arctic Zone, that it has been suggested they may have originated around the North Pole when

that region enjoyed a temperate or tropical climate, as stated by geologists, but were forced southwards by the ice-cap of the glacial period; as it gradually receded following back, returning to breed as near as possible to the old location at the edge of the glaciers.

One of their favourite halting-places is an immense shallow bay on the coast of Northern New Brunswick. More exactly speaking, it is a tranquil lagoon, into which empties an ample river noted for its sea-trout. It is changed by the ebb of the tide into a veritable prairie of bronze sea-grasses intersected by

AN IMMENSE SHALLOW BAY—FISHERMEN WITH HARPOONED ALBICORE IN THE FOREGROUND

a winding creek through which the tide rushes like a rapid river. A narrow strip of sand, with undulating sandhills in the form of snowdrifts, separates its quiet waters from the tumbling surf of the Atlantic, and forms a shining shield to fend off the shock of the white ocean breakers racing to its strand.

Both bay and river bear one of those picturesque Indian names that, lingering on many a river, mountain, and headland, will perpetuate the memory of the red man long after his feeble race has melted away.

These simple children of nature thus recognised the fact that

both are inseparable, that a description of the bay of necessity includes the river. For does not the river lure hither the black bass, the sea-trout, the aristocratic salmon—the support of the fishermen?—and, best of all, swarming schools of smelts, which in winter are pulled up through cuttings in the ice, one draught of the net sometimes capturing a ton of these bright, silvery, slippery, quivering little fishes, pulled up as from some mysterious subterranean retreat? Does not the brackish element made by the 'sea-change' of its waters nourish acres of luxuriant sea grasses which draw hither thousands of geese and brant?

Hence it should be described how many a mile behind the long stretch of evergreen trees, which form the background to the few fishermen's huts dotting the white beach, it issues from the distant cloud-like outline of blue hills, the nursery of several noble streams; how it comes from the homes of the beaver, moose and caribou; through a region of mossy silver birches, elms, and sugar maples; passes the base of many a bleak, bear-haunted mountain; sometimes placidly, gently, falls for miles like a mirror set sloping on Nature's breast; again roars hoarsely through gorges cleft in ancient Laurentian rocks; plunges with delirious bound over rock precipices into dark, deep pools, kissed by drooping branches, haunted by monstrous greedy trout; how its banks echo to the scream of the golden eagle and the fish-hawk, the rattle of the kingfisher, the carpenter work of the big scarlet-headed woodpecker performed on giant hollow red pines, while over its highway there is a ceaseless whistling of the wings of ducks hurrying to and fro along the estuary which the bay sends for many miles among the wooded hills to welcome its waters.

In the autumn, when the sportsman visits these scenes, he rejoices in the delicious light and air. The summer fogs are over, the atmosphere has grown transparent, the breeze, laden with ozone, is clear and bracing. An occasional bath of storm freshens the face of Nature. He will love to think afterwards of serene sunny mornings on the sands; also of raw and gusty days, when waves of sombre hue dashed on the shore, while the shrill piping of the plover, the loud challenging of restless geese added an indescribable charm of wildness and desolateness, when combined with the roar of the resounding sea. What keen delight it was to make a heap of slain victims, kindle a pile of driftwood, and listen to John's yarns while the kettle sang its familiar song and the air grew fragrant with the steaming tea! What enthralling music was the cheery calling of new flocks

of geese, arriving at a vast altitude, from the wintry, mysterious, distant North, while they wheeled to reconnoitre, hailing their well-fed comrades with unmistakable gladness! They were like wearied travellers, tired and hungry, sighting a well-known inn where they intended to take their ease.

To be ready for the flight that is always stirring at the first break of dawn, the sportsman, warmly clad, embarks on waters still reflecting the stars. By the time that shafts of pale yellow and rosy light herald the rising sun, and reveal the woods streaked with scarlet and yellow at the farther side of the bay, he should be in position. That means he should be extended in a 'sink box'[1] with his No. 10 Holland across his knees. Painted decoys, the counterfeit presentment of geese and brant done in wood, should float around him to the number of forty or fifty. The best guide of the bay, the trusty John, should have sculled the canoe to the sand-spit, and have concealed his person behind one of the ricks of salt hay frugally stacked for winter feeding. Then there will come shots of a certainty. See! There is an immense body of birds far up the bay. The rising tide, coupled with a fresh breeze that disturbs the water, is vexing them, as is evident from their peevish and querulous tones. Sooner or later they will rise and disperse. Presently some fisherman's sloop flying along the tortuous channel puts them up. Hark! There smites the ear a mighty rushing sound like the roar of falling waters produced by thousands of strong wings beating the air. A mixed multitude of myriads of brant and geese swarm in the air, giving vent to shrill calling notes. Streaming across the sky they resemble at first a cloud, then a swarm of bees.

The geese are discerned by their forming into single file, or else into flights wedge-shaped like the letter V. The leader often retires, and his place is taken by the next bird.

Brant form into larger flocks, often of over a hundred birds. The surest to decoy are lone birds, or else small flocks of three to a dozen. Some of the moving host are sure to drift within range.

It happens sometimes that a file of geese pass at such a height that the whole cheat becomes evident. As they take in the human form in ambush, they scold like a parcel of fishwives. Many flocks make feints at the decoys, but sheer off playfully. Some will pass on as if not seeing the decoys, and may be enticed back by careful imitative calling, a subdued clucking.

[1] The 'sink box' used is an oblong box long enough to recline in comfortably. It is weighted down with rocks, or lead bars, to the level of the water, and steadied by means of canvas flaps on hinges. It is usually painted a dull grey.

At length there is sure to come sweeping low over the water looming black, increasing in size with astonishing rapidity as they come on at the speed of fifty miles an hour, a flock of brant. They may wheel once or twice sportively, showing the white underneath their bodies, but are surely lured. Are they not quite certain that they have sighted comrades enjoying a breakfast of tender roots of sea grasses? Why should they not share in the feast of fat things? The young birds among them give a pleasant indescribable twitter or chirrup—short, quick, jerky syllables of sounds—very cheery and sportive. They poise on the wing and come actually skimming over the decoys. Two barrels should now account for at least three or four birds; the remainder might give points to a homing pigeon in their speedy exit into space.

John brings up the canoe and gathers in the slain.

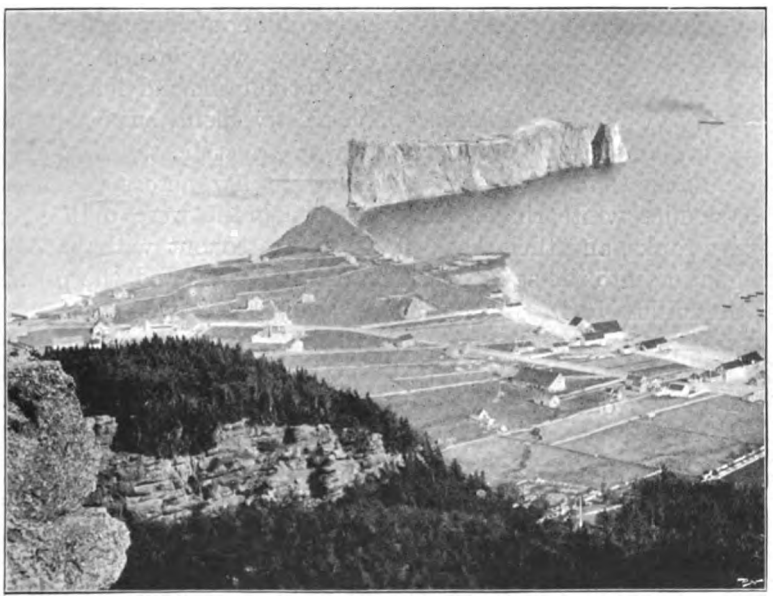
Sometimes the wounded give him a long chase, both brant and geese being given to the practice of submerging their bodies when pursued with only their bills above the surface. But John has the eye of a hawk for marking a bird that is hard hit. It is no uncommon thing for a goose or brant to fly off apparently unhurt, and, after a flight of several hundred yards, suddenly spread its wings, and keeping them set drop gently in the water, to fall over dead. It is unwise to seize a slightly wounded bird, for the formidable beak at the end of the supple neck and the spurs or knuckles of the wings can be used with tremendous effect. If these birds understood their collective power, they might revenge their wrongs by attacking and killing any single sportsman. As the tide advances more shots fall to the gun, but not all such easy work as described. The birds grow more wary as the day goes on, and the light gets more garish. Good marksmanship is called for to bring down a brant going before the wind, a black duck or widgeon fizzing past like a bullet. The increased difficulty, however, adds to the enjoyment of a successful performance.

When the flood tide fills the lagoon till it resembles a magnificent lake the shooting is over for the time being. John is hailed, a landing effected on the sand-bar, and luncheon cooked behind the shelter of a hayrick.

Then John discourses on birds. He says dark clothing is 'pizen' to them, and destroys all hope of success; that the brant go away first, but the geese often remain till the whole bay freezes solid, usually about Christmas; that in spring they remain till the middle of June, when the eggs are well developed;

that brant eggs have never yet been beheld by mortal eye, though fabulous rewards are offered for them; that Indians decoy with bundles of eel grass stuck on sloping sticks. He mentions a curious method practised by Indians for taking gulls. Digging a pit in the sand, they covered it with poles some nine inches apart, over which they laid seaweeds and chopped fish. The man in ambush would drag down bird after bird that visited the bait without alarming the others.

John also says that the white throat patch, and the conspicuous white rumps of both brant and geese, assist the flocks



HOMEWARD BOUND: PASSING PERCÉ ROCK, BAY OF CHALEURS

greatly in keeping together during thick and foggy weather, the conspicuous white markings fore and aft serving as useful recognition colours, supplementing vocal cries. John is good at yarns. I was wont to season his tall stories of carnage with several grains of salt, until the following experience befell me—the most impressive scene of bird life I ever witnessed. I never afterwards doubted John's stories of marvellous bags in days when the birds, wing-weary with some biting merciless snow-storm, put aside all caution and came on the decoys by battalions.

It was the month of November; John and I got out on the

bay when a driving snow-storm came on, which turned to sleet and hail. The night had been so cold that we had to break sheet ice for 200 yards from shore to make the channel. It is needless to say we had the bay to ourselves. It was too rough to launch the sink box, so we dug a hole in the apex of a sand-spit and concealed the box in the sand. I had taken out sixty cartridges—twenty were, unfortunately, ruined by the wet. With the other forty I had shot thirty birds. Then commenced a scene the like of which I never expect to see again. The cruel storm seemed to drive away from the birds all sense of fear. They almost brushed my face with their wings. Then on either hand they commenced to settle. Company after company arrived, like some routed army rallying. Presently two vast armies of mixed geese and brant occupied sand-spits to the right and left. They were cowed by the awful storm, and mostly silent, but at times a raucous clamour went through the whole vast host. The black necks of the Canada geese, with the white bar across the head, the smaller white ringed necks of the brant were uplifted in serried ranks, and their bead-like eyes peered out with pathetic resignation into the strife of the wind and waters and the pelting of the pitiless hail. For an hour I watched this wonderful spectacle. Then almost benumbed with the cold and wet we poled the canoe homewards among the wearied birds that were too listless to get out of our way.

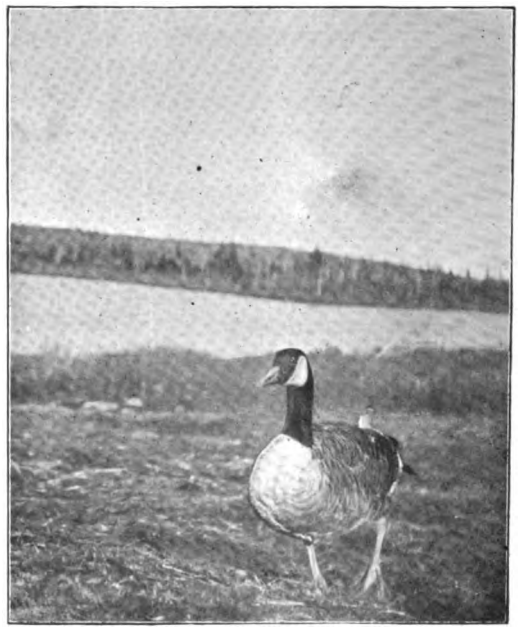
While we have been idly spinning yarns beside the crackling flames, and pulling at our briar-roots, the tide has been busily pouring out the winding channels until the broad bay at last seems emptied and pumped out dry. Under the direct rays of the sun, rows of geese and brant, among the bronzed weeds, indulge in contented conversational tones, while an astonishing mirage causes them to loom and glisten like ranks of soldiers in shining armour. It is of no use to expect shots under such conditions. The gulls alone keep poised on the wing, their day-long flight evidently causing no fatigue, as if they floated on an upward air current. Otherwise all nature is steeped in the languor of an afternoon siesta. Crickets chirp from ridges of starved grass or from patches of yellowish mosses mixed with melancholy bunches of reeds, red where they emerge, as if the soil bled as they pierced it. A blaze of deep rich yellow from a bunch of golden rods and asters surprises one as would an unexpected ribbon in the bonnet of a Quaker maiden. Long files of geese wend their way to still dark ponds of fresh water in the peaty black lands, where they will drink and run the gauntlet of the youthful pot-hunter lying

in ambush among the branches of fir-trees. Sometimes the brown, human-like head of a seal emerges from the wave and peers shyly around. Once the writer watched some thousand gannets feeding outside, evidently on a passing school of herring. From a great height they dropped one after another with a splash into the blue sea, emerging with unfailing certainty with a fish grasped to be swallowed in the air; the splashing caused by the ceaseless pelting of the sea with their white bodies making a curious and beautiful spectacle. To while away another hour there are golden plover to be pursued on the sands. One can watch the tribes of small peeps and snipelets probing for clams and collecting the dinner cast up by the sea; one can pace the glistening strand and watch the white sails, swelling before the breeze, of tall-masted barques, timber-laden, setting forth on their outward passage, or the snowy sails of the little fishing fleet hovering over their lobster traps like a flock of terns, or a row of velvet and bottle-nosed coots (scoters) diving in the surf after shellfish, and indulging in a sham battle of mock chases and retreats.

See! At length the tide is well on the flood; once more box and decoys—for long on the mud—are floating. This afternoon is to be dedicated to the destruction of geese. Look at the signs on the sands, which give us the certainty of sport. There is seen the impress of big webbed feet, and hundreds of holes scooped out of the size of their bodies. The birds have been here last night. They will revisit these sands this evening and get an unexpected reception. Once more in position, with a loud whistling a flock of widgeon bear down close overhead, but depart unaware of their danger. The temptation to fire is resisted, and we have our reward; for ere long an interrogative 'honk? ha-onk? ha-a-onk?' is trumpeted from five large birds coming on in a low plane of flight a few feet above the water-line, with their black necks stretched out stiff and stark and their bills open to speak every few moments. Now is the time for skilful calling—better omitted if not artistic. Roofing the mouth with the open palm, once or twice a subdued responsive 'ah-hunk,' 'ah-hunk' inspires confidence. All distrust is laid aside. There is slight suspense while they overshoot the mark, but the flock rapidly wheel, and steer directly on the decoys. Poising their wings and lowering their bodies they bend their heads this way and that. One might as well think of missing a haystack. The invariable spring in the air at the appearance of the gunner is over. Two heads are well in line, and with a mighty splash down come two ponderous

bodies into the wave. The other barrel accounts for a third as he attempts to move off, with his nervous system apparently prostrated by fright.

Several other flocks share a like fate, for never do geese decoy better than when returning to the same point where they fed unmolested on the previous evening. Later we move to a spot under the 'fly line,' which seems to guide all the flocks coming in from the sea over a certain point—though the flights are too far apart to see each other—as if their exact course had been determined by compass.



SOME ANCIENT SENTINEL

Good results can rarely be obtained by sculling. Yet occasionally, taking advantage of the fact that geese invariably rise against the wind, by crouching in the canoe an insidious approach may be made to a flock on a sand-bar. Some ancient sentinel will presently sound the note of alarm, a rousing 'ah-hunk!' Then twenty black necks will be outstretched, and twenty throats will vociferate 'ah-hunk, ah-hunk!' Walking about uneasily, they will rise *en masse*; but, if luck favours, the gun may now be within sixty or seventy yards, and as they rise one or two come down with a loud swish.

At last the setting sun is reddening the sky over the river, giving back the rich colours it has been absorbing all day long. The birds that have been feeding in the estuary are beginning to stream seaward to spend the night on the bosom of the ocean. We know that at John's cosy cottage, at the mouth of the river, a brown brant and a pint of Hermitage await us. The canoe is headed into the brilliant level rays of sunset lingering low down in the rosy west; so the curtain falls on a long day of ceaseless interest, spent on the breast of the sea, under the boundless blue sky, the ozone from the breeze and the successful sport tingling the blood like some rare old vintage.

INTERRUPTED WAYFARERS

LAWN TENNIS

BY GEORGE R. WOOD

Of all games lawn tennis has probably changed and developed the most during its comparatively short lifetime; for, unlike most other English games, lawn tennis would seem to be an entirely modern invention, with little or no ancient history of its own, innocent alike of all legends and myths as to its birth. Real tennis (and the 'common herd' are apt to confound this with the lawn game) is known as the 'Game of Kings,' and has often been ranked as the 'King of Games.' It has the enviable reputation of having been in time long past the cause of a war, and it will always be a thing of mystery to the uninitiated, to be spoken of with just reverence and with bated breath. Golf has its legends and can also boast of a strain of royal blood, as it were, even though it is only during the last few years that it has become a popular game throughout England. Cricket has been dubbed the national game, and has at least a century of well-authenticated history to boast of, while its mythical genealogy runs back almost to the famous tree in the garden of Eden, from which it is probable that Adam carved the first cricket bat.

But, lawn tennis! any one can understand it. You hit a ball over a net—or try to—and it has to fall within certain marked lines (and the very marking of these lines at first allowed considerable latitude). Such is the popular idea of it, and the game has also had to live down the contemptuous name 'pat ball,' and the unenviable reputation of being on a level with 'croquet' as

an athletic exercise—not even the modern croquet with narrow hoops and a dead-ball boundary, but the old game with vast hoops, a bell, and unlimited room, with plenty of bushes and flower-beds in the near vicinity.

For some years the game was a necessary adjunct of all garden parties, and a court was marked out and a net put up—anywhere. The players, if they could be called players, wandered gracefully about the court in their best bibs and tuckers, and spent a large part of their time hunting in pairs among flower-beds and parterres for balls struck unreasonably hard. The object of the game was to strike graceful attitudes without getting hot, and without endangering the elegance of the costume, rather than to strike the ball. Then the game died as an amusement fitting for garden parties, and people talked feelingly and with some regret of the decease of lawn tennis. In reality it was just coming to life as a game, rising Phœnix-like from its own ashes. One ancient record the game has, which Mr. Heathcote mentions in the Badminton Library 'Lawn Tennis.' In Nicholl's 'Progress of Queen Elizabeth' it is recorded that 'When Queen Elizabeth was entertained at Elvetham in Hampshire, by the Earl of Hertford, after dinner, about three o'clock, ten of his servants, Somersetshire men, in a square green court, before her Majesty's windows, did hang up lines, squaring out the form of a tennis court, and making a cross line in the middle; in this square they played, five to five, with hand ball, with bord and cord, as they tearme it, to the great liking of her Highness.'

But this might apply to real tennis, as it is probable that this game was played in the open before and even after its introduction into covered courts with four walls and a pent-house, much as the Italian game 'pallone' is played nowadays. However, it is pleasant to think that lawn tennis may have some connexion with royalty, however distant, and that it has some right to bear itself as nobly as real tennis and golf.

For our purpose lawn tennis may be said to date from 1874, when Colonel Wingfield introduced the game called 'sphairistike;' but this game, even as that of Badminton, was speedily ousted by its foster-child lawn tennis. In the beginning lawn tennis was played in a court shaped like an hourglass, with the net 4 ft. 8 in. high standing across the narrow part. The one court was divided much as at the present day, but it was into the far end of the court that the service had to drop. In the other court a lozenge-shaped space was marked, from which the player delivered his service, and the opponents served in turn. In 1875 the

M.C.C. drew up a code of rules, reducing the game more or less to its present form; the server had to stand with one foot behind the back line, the lozenge was done away with, but the hourglass shape for the court still survived. In a double game, if the ball were served into the wrong court, the partner of the striker was at liberty to take it. In this same year the game was introduced at the All England Croquet Club at Wimbledon, which soon after became, as it is now, the All England Lawn Tennis Club, and in the same year there appeared in the 'Field' the first denunciation of the practice of volleying at the net, 'a practice condemned as unscientific.' In 1877 the first lawn-tennis championship was held on the grounds of the A.E.L.T.C. Before this event a new set of rules was drawn up for the proper playing of the game. The hourglass-shaped court (which made the 'unscientific volley' a very paying stroke) was done away with, and the rectangular shape was decided on; one fault was allowed without penalty, and the real tennis scoring—fifteen, thirty, forty, deuce, &c.—was adopted.

The first championship was won by Mr. Spencer Gore; he was perhaps the first player to introduce the volley—that is to say, the volley as now known, not a mere pat over the net, but an offensive and winning stroke. However, the volley was not yet fully developed. In that tournament the first nail was struck in the coffin of 'pat ball,' the last being driven in by the Renshaw 'smash.'

In 1878 the second championship meeting was played at Wimbledon, and was won by Mr. Hadow, who defeated the winner of the previous year: Mr. Lawford was third. In 1880 the rules were again slightly altered, becoming virtually what they are now with the exception of the rules for the height of the net at its extremities and for the service. The server might still keep his front foot over the base-line. In this year there appeared in the lawn-tennis heavens two meteors of extraordinary brilliance, on which were fixed the eyes of all tennis enthusiasts for many years—the two Renshaws. During that year these brothers did not win many great events, but they gave promise of the brilliant career which lay before them. In 1881 W. Renshaw took the championships of Ireland, Prince's Club, and All England. From the play of these two has arisen the modern offensive style in lawn-tennis. Mere safety was no longer the most important thing in the game; the volley had become an offensive stroke, used with even more deadly effect than the old driving stroke from the back of the court. The volleying then was

probably even more severe than it is nowadays, though hardly so safe. The Renshaws, and those who imitated them, played for the chance of one 'smash,' with which the rally was either won or lost outright, not content to win by worrying the opponent until he dropped a stroke. In the double game the old style, in which one player kept at the back of the court while the other took his stand on the service line to volley, was given up, and both players took their stand on the service line, or thereabouts, to use the new-found volleying strokes.

By now lawn tennis had ceased to be considered a garden-party game. People generally knew too much about the game to be interested any longer in watching four indifferent performers playing pat ball; they required hard play and good rallies, expecting the players to show their skill—at least, by getting hot. And players for their part refused now to play 'anywhere;' they expected good courts and new balls—not last season's rubbed up to a certain cleanliness on a door-mat—they had become votaries of the real game as distinguished from the 'pat' variation, and would not insult their new-found goddess by playing without serious purpose. Some few still thought that the old-style game was the better, considering that players were becoming, as it were, too professional. A Birmingham paper, reporting in these days of an Edgbaston tournament, said of the champion local pair (really a pair of quiet garden-party tennis-players) that 'they had played a quiet *gentlemanly* game against Renshaw and Grove's hard hitting, but failed to win.'

The old-style player who was in the habit of playing the ball with a heavy cut or with a screw found that the lawn-tennis court was no longer a fit place for him. The courts themselves were becoming too good, and in place of the coarse grass and many inequalities of surface which had helped the twist and had put science at a discount, these old-time players found smooth, carefully kept grounds, innocent of moss or of dandelions, with plenty of room at the back of the courts which was meant to be used. In the early days one would often see a player hit the ball slowly with a twist on it, so that the ball after it had struck the ground would screw back over the net untouched by the opposing players; but now such a stroke met with the fate it deserved, and might even be an actual source of danger to the rash man who tried to make it. It was then with lawn tennis as it is now in the revival of croquet—scientific croquet. An ex-champion croquet player performing on a perfectly level, perfectly kept lawn was asked once how he was getting on in his game, a local

championship. The man was off his game and answered gruffly, 'Can't play a bit; there's this beastly east wind, ruffling the grass, spoils all my best shots.' Yet the lawn was cut as close as machine could cut it. And so it is now with lawn tennis: the player's mistake has become the fault of circumstance—'a false bound,' 'a gratuitous worm cast,' 'a beastly wind,' for which the spectators grilling in the sun have been praying without result.

The racquets also, like the grounds, have become the object of scientific care. At first they were very small, short-handled and flimsy withal. Then came the curly shape, like an egg badly poached, with one side drooping as it were. The stringing also was much experimented on; big squares, medium squares, little squares between the strings have all been tried, and the strings were in some patterns tied into extravagant knots, with the idea that thereby much twist and spin could be imparted to the ball. Nowadays the racquet has a symmetrical and beautiful contour, and there is little variation among the different makes—Slazenger, Tate, Holden, and others—except in the length of the head or in the thickness of the gut. In the beginning of the game there was no recognised standard for the ball; it varied considerably in weight and even in size. At first it was uncovered, and often studded with small projecting bosses to aid the bound; but a covering was soon found to be necessary, and many were the experiments to find the best size and weight, so that the light ball might be hit hard and bound true and high. The cover was very often coloured, so that one would find in a country house a black set, a red set, and so on; but in the end the white cover was found to be the best, suiting most backgrounds, and alone has survived to the present day. And from another point of view the ball is of great importance; it is told how a certain lady looking on at a big tournament insisted that Mr. So-and-So must be a very good player, for, said she, 'You see he holds three balls in his hand!'

Since volleying had come to stay, and when it became of importance to get up to the net as soon as possible in order to effect the volley, it was found that the old rule for service (one foot over the base-line, one behind) conferred too great advantage on the server. Players took advantage of the old lax rule, and getting off the mark before their time, as it were, served almost running, or running served, and were able to arrive at the net almost before the ball. They were thus able to get into good position for volleying without very much trouble to themselves, and the sudden rush of man and ball together was most dis-

concerting for the striker. In 1884 the service rule was altered, and the server had to have his front foot on the line, with the other foot behind it. This rule, backed by careful umpires, who watched to see if the foot were raised off the line before the ball was actually struck, and who exacted a penalty for so doing, checked the too rapid advance to the net.

By now there had arisen the cult of the names of great lawn-tennis players. There is always a certain section of people who are interested in a particular game, even though they do not play it themselves. These people, though no players, become a mine of information as to the real performers, and will talk familiarly of them and of their doings, eventually setting themselves up for critics of the game. Lawn tennis has, as it were, its 'Graces' (in this case both male and female), its 'Stoddarts,' its 'Charles Frys,' though not yet perhaps its 'Ranjis.' The names of the Renshaws, Lewis, Lawford, the Baddeleys, Pym, Stoker, Mahony, the Dohertys, with a host of others, have become things to conjure with, and are spoken at first with awe and reverence, then with careless intimacy, by people who as often as not have never even seen them play. And round the names of these champions will grow up myths and legends which will soon supply in that respect what the history of the game has hitherto lacked.

The Renshaws, Baddeleys, and Dohertys have perhaps made their name more as double players, though at least one of the brothers has in each case gained premier honours by winning the singles championship at Wimbledon. With them may be associated the Allens (twins in addition to being brothers), who have for a long time been considered in the first rank of double players, playing together. It was a great sight to see the Allens playing the Baddeleys. The latter pair hardly spoke throughout the game, making no sign of annoyance or of joy, and diminutive as they are, yet covered the court with quiet skill, so that it looked as if they could not help being in the right place. Nothing seemed to put them out. The Allens were a forcible contrast in more ways than one—big, rather stout, and talking more or less forcibly to and at one another from the beginning to the end. Of these two it is told how the one spoke winged words to the other at a big meeting. *First twin* (loq.): 'Hit 'em, man—don't *peck* at 'em! Fancy a great big chap like you,' &c. &c. The Dohertys, like the Baddeleys, hardly exchange a word during the game, and they always give the impression that they do not care in the least about winning the game and that the whole affair is

rather a bother; they wander about the court, apparently arriving in the right place by a lucky chance. But those who have played against them soon realise that for all this assumed carelessness they are very much 'all there,' and that it is their extraordinary knowledge of the game that makes them assume correct positions almost intuitively. They have, too, the advantage of never appearing hot or done. Some players show most evidently the least signs of exhaustion, holding up, as it were, a danger signal on their faces to the encouragement of their opponents; others seem to grow cooler as they are really growing hotter, and produce in their opponents, themselves showing signs of exhaustion, a feeling of irritation and almost of fear that a man should stand a hard match with such apparent comfort. During a Veteran's final at a big tournament the following was overheard:

First Lady: 'But why is Mr. —— playing? He is marked w.o. in the programme.'

Second Lady: 'I think that denotes that he was unopposed.'

First Lady: 'Oh! I thought it stood for "Worn out."'

And well she might, seeing some players after a best of five sets match on a hot summer's day, under a broiling sun. Lawford alone of the first-class players kept to the old back-of-the-court game, and for a long time held out against the newfangled volleying game. In 1887 he at last won the championship, defeating Ernest Renshaw in the final, a great performance for a man past the age of most champions, and a reward for his persistency in entering for the championship, in the final round of which he had competed unsuccessfully five times. 'He had,' says Mr. Heathcote, 'manfully withstood the prestige of the volley when it was deemed invincible, and single-handed had maintained the value of back play. He had made converts of his chief opponents, and had in turn not disdained to borrow something from them. In each successive year he had learned something, and had gained something. Through disappointment and defeat he had found his way to victory, and he had his reward.'

In 1888 the Lawn Tennis Association was formed, which embraced all the principal clubs. In that year Ernest Renshaw won the championship, and Miss L. Dod, by defeating Mrs. Hillyard, again won the chief ladies' event.

The championship at Wimbledon over, the great players are to be found at tournaments all over England, not only at the well-known ones—Scarborough, Eastbourne, Brighton, Bath, and so forth—but even at the small local meetings, sowing the seed of good play, and helping new players to go in the right way

and to learn the game in good style. The cracks have, as a rule, to give almost overwhelming odds at the small meetings, so that they may be free from the constant charge of 'Pot-hunting.' It is told how two well-known players, brothers, left behind them at their hotel a small portmanteau. They were on a tour, playing in several of the smaller tournaments. Some time after they wrote for the portmanteau, asking that it might be sent on to them at some time. The hotel people found it unlocked, ancient, and generally inclined to come to bits. Looking inside to see if anything ought to be packed before they bound the portmanteau together for the journey, they found it full of silver things, prizes from many meetings, all huddled away anyhow in the receptacle. And the local secretaries are, as a rule, only too glad to get really good players to perform, since they realise how much their presence inspires the local players, anxious to get their game or two against the 'cracks.' At a large local meeting a player was overheard to say: 'Nice meeting this. Is Renshaw here?' 'No,' was the answer. 'Mrs. Hillyard?' 'No.' 'Lewis?' 'No.' 'What a rotten tournament!'

In 1892 was instituted the international match between England and Ireland. This took place at Dublin, doubles only being played. In the following year singles also were instituted, and the match took place at Wimbledon. Nowadays there is also a county championship, which is keenly contested, and for the first time during the present season there will be a ladies' county championship. America took up the game at about the same time as England, and the best players there can now hold their own with the best of the Englishmen; but unfortunately few of their 'cracks' have as yet competed in the Wimbledon championship. Indeed, lawn tennis has spread all over the world, and almost wherever there are English people there is the game played. On the Continent the game is gradually finding favour. In France it was first played by Englishmen only at such southern health resorts as Cannes and Mentone, but now it is played by Frenchmen also; it has also become naturalised in Germany and Switzerland. There are German championships at Baden and at Homburg, Swiss championships at St. Moritz, French championships at Dinard and at Paris, and soon, doubtless, we shall hear of Russian and Turkish championship meetings. And yet not many years ago an Englishman was arrested in Germany on the charge of immodest behaviour because he rolled up his sleeves when playing lawn tennis with ladies.

ON A SHETLAND MOOR

BY H. KNIGHT HORSFIELD

SEEN from this little eminence, the thin white road looks like a tape lying upon the heather. For a long stretch the line is taut, but it slackens at length and coils in and out between the rocks, touching at one point the very edge of the sea. Then it ascends a stony ridge and disappears, to be seen again stretched tightly out across the flat for as far as the eye may follow.

To the left, the surface of the sea is broken by long reefs and scattered rocks fringed by swaying weed, and here and there on the promontories green cormorants are resting, some with outstretched wings as though about to fly, and all with alert heads turned this way and that, yet all moveless in the sunshine, like birds in a picture. On the nearer rocks several oyster-catchers are standing, their black and white plumage showing clear against the grey of the stone.

To the right of the road the moorland extends, until it reaches the sea again, flat for the most part, but once rising to a modest height, and then dipping down to a reedy snipe-bog. From my raised standpoint I can see, over the shoulder of the hill, the 'kye' tethered below, finding fair pasturage at the dryer end of the bog, and further still, right beyond the reed-beds, an arm of the loch is visible, silver in this August sun, with the dim stacks of peat at its side.

It is hot—far too hot to harry the snipe or to seek the scattered golden plover on the hills. It would be a mark of sheer ignorance to mar with a fly the mirror of the loch—on such a day. To do aught save bask and smoke would be simple ingratitude to the heather and the sun. I am no ingrate, and for this day at least I will allow memory to supply me with sport sufficient for my modest needs.

A slight turn on one elbow brings us to the sea. Halcrow, most faithful and inexpensive of gillies, is running the little boat down the track already marked by its upcoming keel in the shingle. The gun is in the bow, and we have also a supply of strong sea-tackle on board. We are very young and keen. There is a curiously new zest in youth and keenness now that one is old enough to appreciate them. Before the boat is well under way, with Halcrow at the oars, we have the gun ready. The green cormorants are still on the rocks. As we draw cautiously nearer, one dives, and our heart stands still. It comes up again, however, about twenty yards off, and the others don't appear to have noticed us.

Something like a prayer is on our lip, and breathing is a relief. Only for a second, however, for we are getting desperately near.

We turn to Halcrow and ask with our eyes if we may shoot. He replies yes, with a dip of his tawny beard. Trembling hands align the barrels, and a green cormorant falls dead on the sea-weed. A *green* cormorant. Why, not one of the fellows at school had ever seen one out of a picture-book. Ah me! greatness is worth having at sixteen.

It is early morning, and the fog hides the sea. We can hear the unseen water lapping on the stones not fifty yards away when we pass on the road. As we climb the hill the air grows clearer. On a little slope just ahead we see something moving dimly in the spectral light. We crouch and watch. Rock-pigeons—one, two, five at least—loom out in the midst of a crowd of satellite starlings. The whole mass rises, the starlings chattering, but we mark one form on the mist larger than the rest and fire hurriedly. Is it down? We can't say. Halcrow can't say. It cleared the rocky ridge, but it might—even Halcrow admits that it *might*—have fallen amid the stones at the other side. We reach the crest and look down. The mist is clearing rapidly now; the broad side of the hill with its heather and rocks is quite clear. We can even see the tethered 'kye' feeding in the bog. But there is no pigeon. We search steadily, doggedly, but with heavy misgivings. Halcrow searches, too, but perfunctorily, as one may with no hope in his heart. Once when he thinks our eye withdrawn, he sits down on a stone; at other times he just beats the heather listlessly with his stick, not really looking.

Then we know we shall never see that pigeon again and we turn to go. Stay; the foot is arrested. There, behind that

frowning rock, on the green of the cropped grass, with wings spread out and azure plumage just stirred by the wind, the pigeon lies.

Strange that after neglecting so many golden opportunities, memory should have kept the picture of that pigeon for me intact just as I saw it on that far-away day.

Evening is drawing in and the hills throw heavy shadows upon the loch. It never grows really dark. At night it merely becomes very still, and the light is subdued so that the landscape may sleep in peace. The ripple that broke the water has died away, and the hoarse cry of the wandering gull is heard no more.

On this side of the loch there are many large partly submerged stones, and standing upon these it is easy to cast far, even to the reed-bed, which is otherwise out of reach. A little while ago, when the wind was at its best, the fish came nearly at every cast. Now the water lies still as glass, save when some monster, lazily feeding, breaks the surface far out where the light falls. Now may we rest and smoke and turn out our little ones, gleaming dimly upon the wet stones, so that we may count them and compare their meagre proportions with the trout of our dreams. Close to us, drawn up on the shingle, is Halcrow's boat, the boat he made himself, to gather the gulls' eggs from the loch islands, probably the worst and least seaworthy boat constructed during the present generation, yet surely on so still a night it may serve. The single seat is nailed flat on the top of the sides, the ends projecting to give purchase of a sort to the oars.

There is no keel, and the bow is square, it having been originally a box. It is hardly safe, but just then the great fish stirs heavily, and our mind is fixed. Once afloat the boat moves awkwardly in this foreign element, but way is being made, and at last the flies are floating far behind in the shadowy distance. All is still, except for the slight beating of the oars which were once battens on a Chicago bacon chest. Above the great lines of the hills the sky is of blue velvet, edged with faint rose. All below is in shadow, save for some distant pathways of light. Along the departing edge of the loch the scattered stones look like a flock of something asleep. Now and then some night breath murmurs in the reeds, and an invisible duck beats fast overhead. The bacon box moves onward. Then suddenly the reel screams, there is some vast movement and rush out in the shadows.

Freed from the restraint of the oars, the bacon box loses its course and turns giddily. The rod quivers and bends like a sapling in a storm.

Ah! will this fish, this giant, never weaken? The gossamer fetter which binds him to us dare do no more than indicate the way we wish him to take. At the first hint of control, the line zip-zips through the water again.

Once it slackens ominously, but as the top is lifted the old delightful weight is there, still strong and sullen, but each moment growing less restless. At last, the meshes of the net are around him, and we see the dim shine on his mighty sides as he turns in his last struggle.

It is said that anglers lie about their fish. May not their exaggeration be the mere despair of the artist who feels that he cannot paint in inches and pounds?

There is one more picture.

The boat, urged by six oars, cuts merrily through the sun-dinted water of the Voe. The mainland, with its whitewashed school-house, and little squares of potatoes and wheat, is beginning to look far away. Over the grassy-topped cliffs of Vaila the gulls hang, pure white against the blue, and on every skerry and stack of rock, the snaky-necked cormorants wait silently. The little tysties—the dovekeys of Nansen—are never far off. They dive as we draw near, to reappear a few yards away and beat the water from their white-banded wings.

For many hours the men row steadily, steering their course to the Voe skerries where the great seals are. The big duck-gun, which you load with a small whisky measure for the shot, is in the bows. Now the vast reef of rock, lying low, so low that at high tide it is nearly submerged, is in clear view. Nearer, we see a few turnstone and dunlin moving on the weedy stones, or flying, with drooping wings, from point to point. A little to the left, a small dark object, like the buoy the fisherman uses to mark his nets, rises and falls in the water. The oars take a new caution, and almost in silence the boat draws nearer foot by foot.

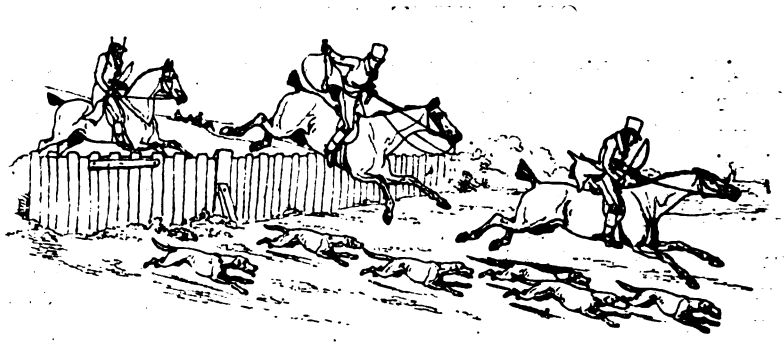
An awful responsibility descends and rests upon the trembling figure clutching the duck-gun in the bows.

The idle boast: the light vain-glorious talk of an hour ago, rise up against him. The boat creeps nearer.

He must fire now, *now* before the next wave intervenes. Snap, the gun has missed fire and the seal has gone.

. . . . . .

The pipe has gone out, too, and dinner, at the little Post-office where we are housed, will be waiting.



SOME EXPERIENCES OF AN IRISH R.M.

BY E. Œ. SOMERVILLE AND MARTIN ROSS

No. XI. OCCASIONAL LICENSES

'It's out of the question,' I said, looking forbiddingly at Mrs. Moloney through the spokes of the bicycle that I was pumping up outside the grocer's in Scabawn.

'Well, indeed, Major Yeates,' said Mrs. Moloney, advancing excitedly, and placing on the nickel plating a hand that I had good and recent cause to know was warm, 'sure I know well that if th' angel Gabriel came down from heaven looking for a license for the races, your honour wouldn't give it to him without a charackther; but as for Michael! Sure, the world knows what Michael is!'

I had been waiting for Philippa for already nearly half an hour, and my temper was not at its best.

'Character or no character, Mrs. Moloney,' said I with asperity, 'the magistrates have settled to give no occasional licenses, and if Michael were as sober as——'

'Is it sober! Help us!' exclaimed Mrs. Moloney with an upward rolling of her eye to the Recording Angel; 'I'll tell your honour the truth. I'm his wife, now, fifteen years, and I never seen the sign of dhrink on Michael only once, and that was when he went out o' good nature helping Timsy Ryan to whitewash his house, and Timsy and himself had a couple o' pots o' porther, and look, he was as little used to it that his head got light, and he walked away out to dhrive in the cows and it no more than eleven o'clock in the day! And the cows, the craytures, as much surprised, goin' hither and over the four corners of the road from him! Faith, ye'd have to laugh. "Michael," says I to him,

'ye're dhrunk!" "I am," says he, and the tears rained from his eyes. I turned the cows from him. "Go home," I says, "and lie down on Willy Tom's bed——"'

At this affecting point my wife came out of the grocer's with a large parcel to be strapped to my handlebar, and the history of Mr. Moloney's solitary lapse from sobriety got no farther than Willy Tom's bed.

'You see,' I said to Philippa, as we bicycled quietly home through the hot June afternoon, 'we've settled we'll give no licenses for the sports. Why even young Sheehy, who owns three pubs in Scabawn, came to me and said he hoped the magistrates would be firm about it, as these one-day licenses were quite unnecessary, and only led to drunkenness and fighting, and every man on the Bench has joined in promising not to grant any.'

'How nice, dear!' said Philippa absently. 'Do you know Mrs. McDonnell can only let me have three dozen cups and saucers; I wonder if that will be enough?'

'Do you mean to say you expect three dozen people?' said I.

'Oh, it's always well to be prepared,' replied my wife evasively.

During the next few days I realised the true inwardness of what it was to be prepared for an entertainment of this kind. Games were not at a high level in my district. Football, of a wild, guerilla species, was waged intermittently, blended in some inextricable way with Home Rule and a brass band, and on Sundays gatherings of young men rolled a heavy round stone along the roads, a rudimentary form of sport, whose fascination lay primarily in the fact that it was illegal, and, in lesser degree, in betting on the length of each roll. I had had a period of enthusiasm during which I thought I was going to be the apostle of cricket in the neighbourhood, but my mission dwindled to single wicket with my yard boy, Peter Cadogan, who was indulgent but bored, and sometimes frightened, and I swiped the ball through the dining-room window, and someone took one of the stumps to poke the laundry fire. Once a year, however, on that festival of the Roman Catholic Church which is familiarly known as 'Pether and Paul's day,' the district was wont to make a spasmodic effort at athletic sports, which were duly patronised by the gentry and promoted by the publicans, and this year the honour of a steward's green rosette was conferred upon me. Philippa's genius for hospitality here saw its chance, and broke forth into unbridled tea-party in connexion with the sports, even involving me in the hire of a tent, the conveyance of chairs and tables, and other large operations.

It chanced that Flurry Knox had on this occasion lent the fields for the sports, with the proviso that horse-races and a tug-of-war were to be added to the usual programme; Flurry's participation in events of this kind seldom failed to be of an inflaming character. As he and I planted larch spars for the high jump, and stuck furze-bushes into hurdles (locally known as 'hurrls'), and skirmished hourly with people who wanted to sell drink on the course, I thought that my next summer leave would singularly coincide with the festival consecrated to St. Peter and St. Paul. We made a grand stand of quite four feet high,

MY MISSION DWINDLED TO SINGLE WICKET WITH PETER CADOGAN

out of old fish-boxes, which smelt worse and worse as the day wore on, but was, none the less, as sought after by those for whom it was not intended as is the Royal enclosure at Ascot; we broke gaps in all the fences to allow carriages on to the ground, we armed a gang of the worst blackguards in Scabawn with cart-whips, to keep the course, and felt that organisation could go no further.

The momentous day of Pether and Paul opened badly, with heavy clouds and every indication of rain, but after a few thunder showers things brightened, and it seemed within the bounds of

possibility that the weather might hold up. When I got down to the course on the day of the sports the first thing I saw was a tent of that peculiar filthy grey that usually enshrines the sale of porter, with an array of barrels in a crate beside it; I bore down upon it in all the indignant majesty of the law, and in so doing came upon Flurry Knox, who was engaged in flogging boys off the Grand Stand.

'Sheehy's gone one better than you!' he said, without taking any trouble to conceal the fact that he was amused.

'Sheehy!' I said; 'why, Sheehy was the man who went to every magistrate in the country to ask them to refuse a license for the sports.'

'Yes, he took some trouble to prevent anyone else having a look in,' replied Flurry; 'he asked every magistrate but one, and that was the one that gave him the license.'

'You don't mean to say that it was you?' I demanded in high wrath and suspicion, remembering that Sheehy bred horses, and that my friend Mr. Knox was a person of infinite resource in the matter of a deal.

'Well, well,' said Flurry, rearranging a disordered fish-box, 'and me that's a churchwarden, and sprained my ankle a month ago with running down stairs at my grandmother's to be in time for prayers! Where's the use of a good character in this country?'

'Not much when you keep it eating its head off for want of exercise,' I retorted; 'but if it wasn't you, who was it?'

'Do you remember old Moriarty out at Castle Ire?'

I remembered him extremely well as one of those representatives of the people with whom a too paternal Government had leavened the effete ranks of the Irish magistracy.

'Well,' resumed Flurry, 'that license was as good as a five-pound note in his pocket.'

I permitted myself a comment on Mr. Moriarty suitable to the occasion.

'Oh, that's nothing,' said Flurry easily; 'he told me one day when he was half screwed that his Commission of the Peace was worth a hundred and fifty a year to him in turkeys and whisky, and he was telling the truth for once.'

At this point Flurry's eye wandered, and following its direction I saw Lady Knox's smart 'bus cleaving its way through the throngs of country people, lurching over the ups and downs of the field like a ship in a sea. I was too blind to make out the component parts of the white froth that crowned it on top, and seethed

forth from it when it had taken up a position near the tent in which Philippa was even now propping the legs of the tea-table, but from the fact that Flurry addressed himself to the door, I argued that Miss Sally had gone inside.

Lady Knox's manner had something more than its usual bleakness. She had brought, as she promised, a large contingent, but from the way that the strangers within her gates melted impalpably and left me to deal with her single-handed, I drew the further deduction that all was not well.

'Did you ever in your life see such a gang of women as I have brought with me?' she began with her wonted directness, as I piloted her to the Grand Stand, and placed her on the stoutest looking of the fish-boxes. 'I have no patience with men who yacht! Bernard Shute has gone off to the Clyde, and I had counted on his being a man at my dance next week. I suppose you'll tell me you're going away too.'

I assured Lady Knox that I would be a man to the best of my ability.

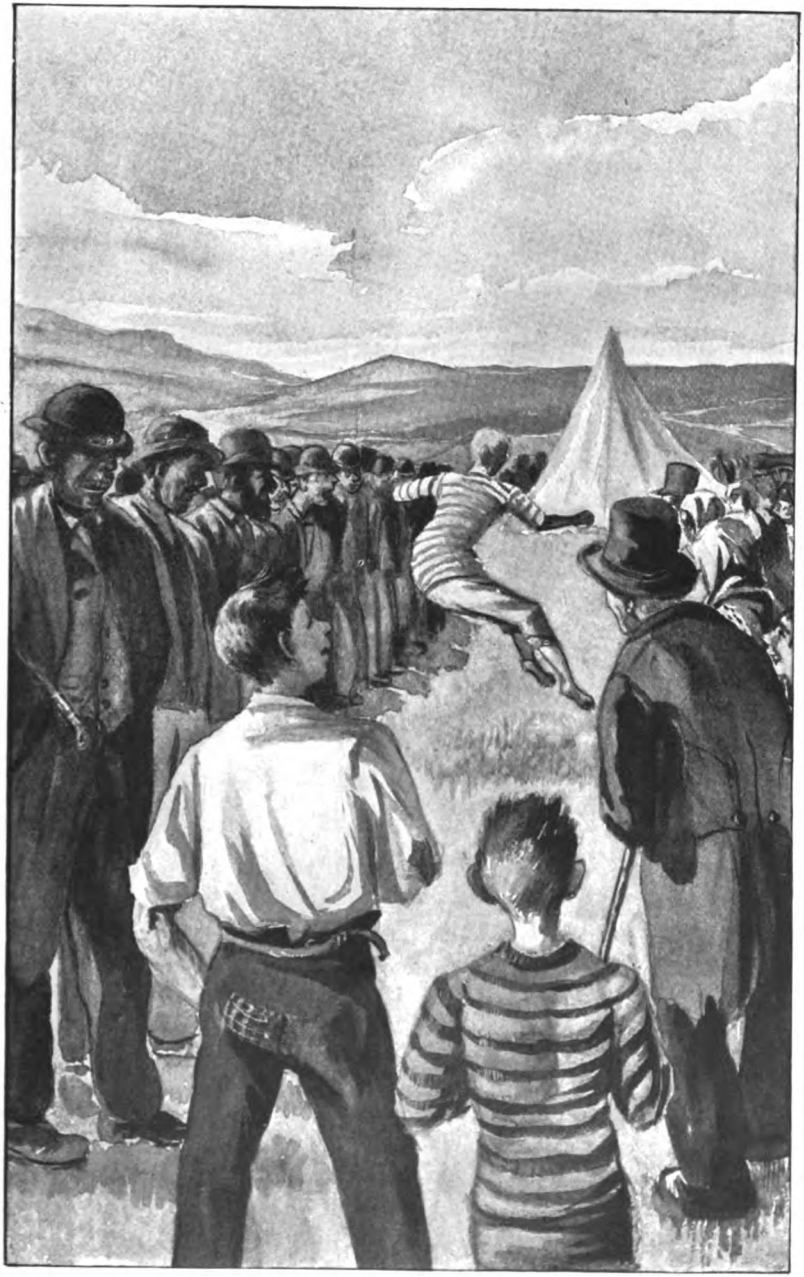
'This is the last dance I shall give,' went on her ladyship, unappeased; 'the men in this country consist of children and cads.'

I admitted that we were but a poor lot, 'but,' I said, 'Miss Sally told me ——'

'Sally's a fool!' said Lady Knox, with a falcon eye at her daughter, who happened to be talking to her distant kinsman, Mr. Flurry of that ilk.

The races had by this time begun with a competition known as the 'Hop, Step, and Lep;' this, judging by the yells, was a highly interesting display, but as it was conducted between two impervious rows of onlookers, the aristocracy on the fish-boxes saw nothing save the occasional purple face of a competitor, starting into view above the wall of backs like a jack-in-the-box. For me, however, the odorous sanctuary of the fish-boxes was not to be. I left it guarded by Slipper with a cart-whip of flail-like dimensions, as disreputable an object as could be seen out of low comedy, with some one's old white cords on his bandy legs, butcher-boots three sizes too big for him, and a black eye. The small boys fled before him; in the glory of his office he would have flailed his own mother off the fish-boxes had occasion served.

I had an afternoon of decidedly mixed enjoyment. My stewardship blossomed forth like Aaron's rod, and added to itself the duties of starter, handicapper, general referee, and



'HOP, STEP, AND LEP'

chucker-out, besides which I from time to time strove with emissaries who came from Philippa with messages about water and kettles. Flurry and I had to deal singlehanded with the foot-races (our brothers in office being otherwise engaged at Mr. Sheehy's), a task of many difficulties, chiefest being that the spectators all swept forward at the word 'Go!' and ran the race with the competitors, yelling curses, blessings, and advice upon them, taking short cuts over anything and everybody, and mingling inextricably with the finish. By fervent applications of the whips, the course was to some extent purged for the quarter-mile, and it would, I believe, have been a triumph of handicapping had not an unforeseen disaster overtaken the favourite—old Mrs. Knox's bath-chair boy. Whether, as was alleged, his braces had or had not been tampered with by a rival was a matter that the referee had subsequently to deal with in the thick of a free fight; but the painful fact remained that in the course of the first lap what were described as 'his galluses' abruptly severed their connexion with the garments for whose safety they were responsible, and the favourite was obliged to seek seclusion in the crowd.

HE WOULD HAVE FLAILED HIS OWN MOTHER HAD OCCASION SERVED

The tug-of-war followed close on this *contretemps*, and had the excellent effect of drawing away, like a blister, the inflammation set up by the grievances of the bath-chair boy. I cannot at this moment remember of how many men each team consisted; my sole aim was to keep the numbers even, and to baffle the volunteers who, in an ecstasy of sympathy, attached themselves to the tail of the rope at moments when their champions weakened. The rival forces dug their heels in and tugged, in an uproar that drew forth the innermost line of customers from Mr. Sheehy's porter tent, and even attracted 'the quality' from the haven of the fish-boxes, Slipper, in the capacity of Squire of Dames, pioneering Lady Knox through the crowd with the cart-whip, and with language whose nature was providentially veiled, for the most part, by the din. The tug-of-war continued unabated. One team was getting the worst of it, but hung doggedly on, sinking lower and lower till they gradually sat down; nothing short of the trump of judgment could have

conveyed to them that they were breaking rules, and both teams settled down by slow degrees on to their sides, with the rope under them, and their heels still planted in the ground, bringing about complete deadlock. I do not know the record duration for a tug-of-war, but I can certify that the Cullinagh and Knockranny teams lay on the ground at full tension for half an hour, like men in apoplectic fits, each man with his respective adherents howling over him, blessing him, and adjuring him to continue.

With my own nauseated eyes I saw a bearded countryman, obviously one of Mr. Sheehy's best customers, fling himself on his knees beside one of the combatants, and kiss his crimson and streaming face in a rapture of encouragement. As he shoved unsteadily past me on his return journey to Mr. Sheehy's, I heard him informing a friend that 'he cried a handful over Danny Mulloy, when he seen the poor brave boy so shtubborn, and, indeed, he couldn't say why he cried.'

'For good nature ye'd cry,' suggested the friend.

'Well, just that, I suppose,' returned Danny Mulloy's admirer resignedly; 'indeed, if it was only two cocks ye seen fightin' on the road, yer heart'd take part with one o' them!'

I had begun to realise that I might as well abandon the tug-of-war and occupy myself elsewhere, when my wife's much-harassed messenger brought me the portentous tidings that Mrs. Yeates wanted me at the tent at once. When I arrived I found the tent literally bulging with Philippa's guests; Lady Knox, seated on a hamper, was taking off her gloves, and loudly announcing her desire for tea, and Philippa, with a flushed face and a crooked hat, breathed into my ear the awful news that both the cream and the milk had been forgotten.

'But Flurry Knox says he can get me some,' she went on; 'he's gone to send people to milk a cow that lives near here. Go out and see if he's coming.'

I went out and found, in the first instance, Mrs. Cadogan, who greeted me with the prayer that the divil might roast Julia McCarthy that legged it away to the races and left the cream afther her on the servants' hall table. 'Sure, Misther Flurry's gone looking for a cow, and what cow would there be in a backwards place like this? And look at me shtriving to keep the kettle simpering on the fire, and not as much coals undher it as 'd redden a pipe!'

'Where's Mr. Knox?' I asked.

'Himself and Slipper's galloping the counthry like the deer. I believe it's to the house above they went, sir.'

I followed them up a rocky hill to the house above, and found Flurry and Slipper engaged in the patriarchal task of driving two brace of coupled and spancelled goats into a shed.

'It's the best we can do,' said Flurry briefly; 'there isn't a cow to be found, and the people are all down at the sports. Be d——d to you, Slipper, don't let them go from you!' as the goats charged and doubled like football players.

'But goats' milk!' I said, paralysed by horrible memories of what tea used to taste like at Gib.

'They'll never know it!' said Flurry, cornering a venerable nanny; 'here, hold this divil, and hold her tight!'

I have no time to dwell upon the pastoral scene that followed. Suffice it to say, that at the end of ten minutes of scorching profanity from Slipper, and incessant warfare with the goats, the latter had reluctantly yielded two small jugsful, and the dairy-maids had exhibited a nerve and skill in their trade that won my lasting respect.

'I knew I could trust *you*, Mr. Knox!' said Philippa, with shining eyes, as we presented her with the two foaming beakers. I suppose a man is never a hero to his wife, but if she could have realised the bruises on my legs, I think she would have reserved a blessing for me also.

What was thought of the goats' milk I gathered symptomatically from a certain fixity of expression that accompanied the first sip of the tea, and from observing that comparatively few ventured on second cups. I also noted that after a brief conversation with Flurry, Miss Sally poured hers secretly on to the grass. Lady Knox had throughout the day preserved an aspect so threatening that no change was perceptible in her demeanour. In the throng of hungry guests I did not for some time notice that Mr. Knox had withdrawn until something in Miss Sally's eye summoned me to her, and she told me she had a message from him for me.

'Couldn't we come outside?' she said.

Outside the tent, within less than six yards of her mother, Miss Sally confided to me a scheme that made my hair stand on end. Summarised, it amounted to this: That, first, she was in the primary stage of a deal with Sheehy for a four-year-old chestnut colt, for which Sheehy was asking double its value on the assumption that it had no rival in the country; that, secondly, they had just heard it was going to run in the first race; and, thirdly and lastly, that as there was no other horse available, Flurry was going to take old Sultan out of the 'bus and ride him

in the race; and that Mrs. Yeates had promised to keep mamma safe in the tent while the race was going on, and 'you know, Major Yeates, it would be delightful to beat Sheehy after his getting the better of you all about the license!'

With this base appeal to my professional feelings, Miss Knox paused, and looked at me insinuatingly. Her eyes were greeny-grey, and very beguiling.

'Come on,' she said; 'they want you to start them!'

Pursued by visions of the just wrath of Lady Knox, I weakly followed Miss Sally to the farther end of the second field, from which point the race was to start. The course was not a serious one: two or three natural banks, a stone wall, and a couple of 'hurrls.' There were but four riders, including Flurry, who was seated composedly on Sultan, smoking a cigarette and talking confidentially to Slipper. Sultan, although something stricken in years and touched in the wind, was a brown horse who in his day had been a hunter of no mean repute; even now he occasionally carried Lady Knox in a sedate and gentlemanly manner, but it struck me that it was trying him rather high to take him from the pole of the 'bus after twelve miles on a hilly road, and hustle him over a country against a four-year-old. My acutest anxiety, however, was to start the race as quickly as possible, and to get back to the tent in time to establish an *alibi*; therefore I repressed my private sentiments, and, tying my handkerchief to a stick, determined that no time should be fashionably frittered away in false starts.

They got away somehow; I believe Sheehy's colt was facing the wrong way at the moment when I dropped the flag, but a friend turned him with a stick, and, with a cordial and timely whack, speeded him on his way on sufficiently level terms, and then, somehow, instead of returning to the tent, I found myself with Miss Sally on the top of a tall narrow bank, in a precarious line of other spectators, with whom we toppled and swayed, and, in moments of acuter emotion, held on to each other in unaffected comradeship.

Flurry started well, and from our commanding position we could see him methodically riding at the first fence at a smart hunting canter, closely attended by James Canty's brother on a young black mare, and by an unknown youth on a big white horse. The hope of Sheehy's stable, a leggy chestnut, ridden by a cadet of the house of Sheehy, went away from the friend's stick like a rocket, and had already refused the first bank twice before old Sultan decorously changed feet on it and dropped down

into the next field with tranquil precision. The white horse scrambled over it on his stomach, but landed safely, despite the fact that his rider clasped him round the neck during the process; the black mare and the chestnut shouldered one another over at the hole the white horse had left, and the whole party went away in a bunch and jumped the ensuing hurdle without disaster. Flurry continued to ride at the same steady hunting pace, accompanied respectfully by the white horse and by Jerry Canty on the black mare. Sheehy's colt had clearly the legs of the party, and did some showy galloping between the jumps, but as he refused to face the banks without a lead, the end of the first round found the field still a sociable party personally conducted by Mr. Knox.

'That's a dam nice horse,' said one of my hangers-on, looking approvingly at Sultan as he passed us at the beginning of the second round, making a good deal of noise but apparently going quite at his ease; 'you might depind your life on him, and he have the crabbedest jock in the globe of Ireland on him this minute.'

'Canty's mare's very sour,' said another; 'look at her now, baulking the bank! she's as cross as a bag of weasels.'

'Begob, I wouldn't say but she's a little sign lame,' resumed the first; 'she was going light on one leg on the road awhile ago.'

'I tell you what it is,' said Miss Sally, very seriously, in my ear, 'that chestnut of Sheehy's is settling down. I'm afraid he'll gallop away from Sultan at the finish, and the wall won't stop him. Flurry can't get another inch out of Sultan. He's riding him well,' she ended in a critical voice, which yet was not quite like her own. Perhaps I should not have noticed it but for the fact that the hand that held my arm was trembling. As for me, I thought of Lady Knox, and trembled too.

There now remained but one bank, the trampled remnant of the furze hurdle, and the stone wall. The pace was beginning to improve, and the other horses drew away from Sultan; they charged the bank at full gallop, the black mare and the chestnut flying it perilously, with a windmill flourish of legs and arms from their riders, the white horse racing up to it with a gallantry that deserted him at the critical moment, with the result that his rider turned a somersault over his head and landed, amidst the roars of the onlookers, sitting on the fence facing his horse's nose. With creditable presence of mind he remained on the bank, towed the horse over, scrambled on to his back again and started afresh. Sultan, thirty yards to the bad, pounded

doggedly on, and Flurry's cane and heels remained idle; the old horse, obviously blown, slowed cautiously coming in at the jump. Sally's grip tightened on my arm, and the crowd yelled as Sultan, answering to a hint from the spurs and a touch at his mouth, heaved himself on to the bank. Nothing but sheer riding on Flurry's part got him safe off it, and saved him from the consequences of a bad peck on landing; none the less, he pulled himself together and went away down the hill for the stone wall as stoutly as ever. The high road skirted the last two fields, and there was a gate in the roadside fence beside the place where the stone wall met it at right angles. I had noticed this gate, because during the first round Slipper had been sitting on it, demonstrating with his usual fervour. Sheehy's colt was leading, with his nose in the air, his rider's hands going like a circular saw, and his temper, as a bystander remarked, 'up on end;' the black mare, half mad from spurring, was going hard at his heels, completely out of hand; the white horse was steering steadily for the wrong side of the flag, and Flurry, by dint of cutting corners and of saving every yard of ground, was close enough to keep his antagonists' heads over their shoulders, while their right arms rose and fell in unceasing flagellation.

'There'll be a smash when they come to the wall! If one falls they'll all go!' panted Sally. 'Oh!—— Now! Flurry! Flurry!——'

What had happened was that the chestnut colt had suddenly perceived that the gate at right angles to the wall was standing wide open, and, swinging away from the jump, he had bolted headlong out on to the road, and along it at top speed for his home. After him fled Canty's black mare, and with her, carried away by the spirit of stampede, went the white horse.

Flurry stood up in his stirrups and gave a view-halloa as he cantered down to the wall. Sultan came at it with the send of the hill behind him, and jumped it with a skill that intensified, if that were possible, the volume of laughter and yells around us. By the time the black mare and the white horse had returned and ignominously bundled over the wall to finish as best they might, Flurry was leading Sultan towards us.

'That blackguard, Slipper!' he said, grinning; 'everyone'll say I told him to open the gate! But look here, I'm afraid we're in for trouble. Sultan's given himself a bad over-reach; you could never drive him home to-night. And I've just seen Norris lying blind drunk under a wall!'

Now Norris was Lady Knox's coachman. We stood aghast

SULTAN JUMPED IT WITH A SKILL THAT INTENSIFIED THE VOLUME OF LAUGHTER AND YELLS AROUND US

at this 'horror on horror's head,' the blood trickled down Sultan's heel, and the lather lay in flecks on his dripping, heaving sides, in irrefutable witness to the iniquity of Lady Knox's only daughter. Then Flurry said:

'Thank the Lord, here's the rain!'

At the moment I admit that I failed to see any cause for gratitude in this occurrence, but later on I appreciated Flurry's masterly grasp of circumstances.

That appreciation was, I think, at its highest development about half an hour afterwards, when I, an unwilling conspirator, (a part with which my acquaintance with Mr. Knox had rendered me but too familiar), unfurled Mrs. Cadogan's umbrella over Lady Knox's head, and hurried her through the rain from the tent to the 'bus, keeping it and my own person well between her and the horses. I got her in, with the rest of her bedraggled and exhausted party, and slammed the door.

'Remember, Major Yeates,' she said through the window, 'you are the *only* person here in whom I have any confidence. I don't wish *any* one else to touch the reins,' this with a glance towards Flurry, who was standing near.

'I'm afraid I'm only a moderate whip,' I said.

'My dear man,' replied Lady Knox testily, 'those horses could drive themselves!'

I slunk round to the front of the 'bus. Two horses, carefully rugged, were in it, with the inevitable Slipper at their heads.

'Slipper's going with you,' whispered Flurry, stepping up to me; 'she won't have me at any price. He'll throw the rugs over them when you get to the house, and if you hold the umbrella well over her she'll never see. I'll manage to get Sultan over somehow, when Norris is sober. That will be all right.'

I climbed to the box without answering, my soul being bitter within me, as is the soul of a man who has been persuaded by womenkind against his judgment.

'Never again!' I said to myself, picking up the reins; 'let her marry him or Bernard Shute, or both of them if she likes, but I won't be roped into this kind of business again!'

Slipper drew the rugs from the horses, revealing on the near side Lady Knox's majestic carriage horse, and on the off, a thick-set brown mare of a little over 15 hands.

'What brute is this?' said I to Slipper, as he swarmed up beside me.

'I don't rightly know where Misther Flurry got her,' said

Slipper, with one of his hiccoughing crows of laughter; 'give her the whip, Major, and'—here he broke into song:

'Howld to the shteel,
Honamaundhiaoul; she'll run off like an eel!'

'If you don't shut your mouth,' said I, with pent-up ferocity, 'I'll chuck you off the 'bus.'

Slipper was but slightly drunk, and, taking this delicate rebuke in good part, he relapsed into silence.

Wherever the brown mare came from, I can certify that it was not out of double harness. Though humble and anxious to oblige, she pulled away from the pole as if it were red hot, and at critical moments had a tendency to sit down. However, we squeezed without misadventure among the donkey carts and between the groups of people, and bumped at length in safety out on to the high road.

Here I thought it no harm to take Slipper's advice, and I applied the whip to the brown mare, who seemed inclined to turn round. She immediately fell into an uncertain canter that no effort of mine could frustrate; I could only hope that Miss Sally would foster conversation inside the 'bus and create a distraction; but judging from my last view of the party, and of Lady Knox in particular, I thought she was not likely to be successful. Fortunately the rain was heavy and thick, and a rising west wind gave every promise of its continuance. I had little doubt but that I should catch cold, but I took it to my bosom with gratitude as I reflected how it was drumming on the roof of the 'bus and blurring the windows.

We had reached the foot of a hill, about a quarter of a mile from the racecourse; the Castle Knox horse addressed himself to it with dignified determination, but the mare showed a sudden and alarming tendency to jib.

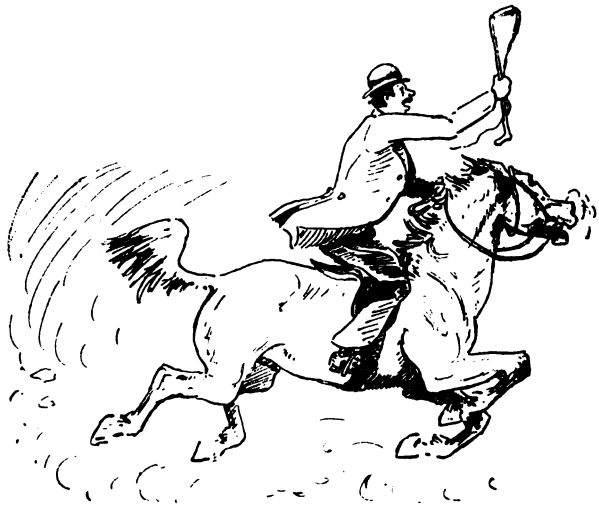
'Belt her, Major!' vociferated Slipper, as she hung back from the pole chain with the collar half way up her ewe neck, 'and give it to the horse, too! He'll dhrag her!'

I was in the act of 'belting,' when a squealing whinny struck upon my ear, accompanied by a light pattering gallop on the road behind us; there was an answering roar from the brown mare, a roar, as I realised with a sudden drop of the heart, of outraged maternal feeling, and in another instant a pale yellow foal sprinted up beside us, with shrill whickerings of joy. Had there at this moment been a boghole handy, I should have turned the 'bus into it without hesitation; as there was no accommodation

of the kind, I laid the whip severely into everything I could reach, including the foal. The result was that we topped the hill at a gallop, three abreast, like a Russian troitska; it was like my usual luck that at this identical moment we should meet the police patrol, who saluted respectfully.

'That the divil may blisther Michael Moloney!' ejaculated Slipper, holding on to the rail; 'didn't I give him the foaleen and a halther on him to keep him! I'll howld you a pint 't'was the wife let him go, for she being vexed about the license! Sure that one's a March foal an' he'd run from here to Cork!'

There was no sign from my inside passengers, and I held on at a round pace, the mother and child galloping absurdly, the



'SHTOP! SHTOP THIEF!

carriage horse pulling hard, but behaving like a gentleman. I wildly revolved plans of how I would make Slipper turn the foal in at the first gate we came to, of what I should say to Lady Knox supposing the worst happened and the foal accompanied us to her hall door, and of how I would have Flurry's blood at the earliest possible opportunity, and here the fateful sound of galloping behind us was again heard.

'It's impossible!' I said to myself; 'she can't have twins!'

The galloping came nearer, and Slipper looked back.

'Murdher alive!' he said in a stage whisper; 'Tom Sheehy's afther us on the butcher's pony!'

'What's that to me?' I said, dragging my team aside

to let him pass; 'I suppose he's drunk, like everyone else.'

Then the voice of Tom Sheehy made itself heard.

'Shtop! Shtop thief!' he was bawling; 'give up my mare! How will I get me porther home!'

That was the closest shave I have ever had, and nothing could have saved the position but the torrential nature of the rain and the fact that Lady Knox had on a new bonnet. I explained to her at the carriage door that Sheehy was drunk (which was the one unassailable feature of the case), and had come after his foal, which, with the fatuity of its kind, had escaped from a field and followed us. I did not mention to Lady Knox that when Mr. Sheehy retreated, apologetically, dragging the foal after him in a halter belonging to one of her own carriage horses, he had a sovereign of mine in his pocket, and during the narration I avoided Miss Sally's eye as carefully as she avoided mine.

The only comments on the day's events that are worthy of record were that Philippa said to me that she had not been able to understand what the curious taste in the tea had been till Sally told her it was turf-smoke, and that Mrs. Cadogan said to Philippa that night that 'the Major was that dhrinched that if he had a shirt between his skin and himself he could have wrung it,' and that Lady Knox said to a mutual friend that, though Major Yeates had been extremely kind and obliging, he was an uncommonly bad whip.

NOTES

BY 'RAPIER'

SOME very interesting figures were quoted by Lord Bathurst at the Peterborough Hound Show, with regard to the number of men who go hunting, and their equipments—figures too curious to be left neglected in the ephemeral columns of a daily paper. It is difficult to arrive at statistics on these subjects, but Lord Bathurst had evidently taken a great deal of pains to be accurate, and it is satisfactory to get away from the hasty guesswork that is generally employed in articles on this theme. It appears that there are now 221 packs of Fox Hounds in the United Kingdom—180 in England, 26 in Scotland, and 15 in Ireland. Many people will be surprised to note how few there are in the latter country, which is supposed to be so greatly given over to the chase; one would like to know how many more than 15 were in active work twenty years ago? These packs include 8,000 couples of hounds, Lord Bathurst stated, and necessitate the employment of 100,000 horses of the value of 7,000,000*l.*, involving an outlay of 5,000,000*l.* per annum for their keep. There must be a certain amount of guesswork, of course, about these latter figures, for different authorities would doubtless estimate the average value of the hunter very differently; but I am strongly inclined to think, having given a good deal of attention to the matter, that the details are about as accurate as they can be made, and they are certainly well worth record.

A French friend, who sends me every week accounts of sport in France, tells me an amusing story of what happened lately in a *sous-préfecture* of Normandy. There not having been any racing there before, it occurred to the authorities that a little

sport might be not only popular, but remunerative, and they got up a race meeting one Sunday. Not a very brilliant class of animal was seen, but on the whole a decent sort of card was compiled, and the success was even greater than had been anticipated. The authorities were delighted; so much so, that they determined to get up another meeting the following week. Every arrangement was made without any loss of time as to the engagement of officials, refreshments, care of the course, everything, in fact, with one trifling omission—the horses that were to race. As it happened, there was one man in the place who pointed out to them the necessity of observing certain formalities in the way of making up stakes and apprising owners and trainers generally of the fact that a meeting was to take place, as also that details of it had to appear in the official publication a certain length of time before the races were run, and so on. He had seen to all this with regard to the previous meeting, and informed the mayor and his court that the second meeting could not possibly be held. They, however, were not going to be daunted by such a trifling little obstacle as no horses. There was a big jobmaster in the town, and to him they applied to help them out of their difficulties. He had a number of hacks and carriage horses in his stables, and expressed his readiness to place them at the disposal of the authorities. This seemed to the mayor and his colleagues to fulfil every possible requirement. Between them they compiled a beautifully imaginative card, naming all the horses, and temporarily bequeathing them to various more or less well-known owners. Colours were hastily improvised, and the boys from the stables did duty in place of the jockeys whom the mayor would have liked to have seen if they had not been elsewhere engaged. The meeting duly took place; the sport was generally admitted to have been at least equal to that of the previous week; every one was delighted, and what more could anybody want?

It is curious to note how speedily it often happens that, when it has been generally settled which is the best two-year-old out, a better promptly appears. Mr. W. Low's Elopement was recently set down as superior to anything seen so far. Very little was proved by his easy victory in the Hurstbourne Stakes, as that was the merest exercise canter for him; but he had gone to Ascot with a great reputation, and it certainly seemed, from the style in which he disposed of Corblets Bay, that the estimate

formed of him was well justified. At Lingfield, however, Jouvence beat him, giving 3 lbs. it is true; but I regard Mornington Cannon as at least that amount better than Sloan when it comes to a close finish. Jouvence had been behind The Gorgon, Bonnie Lad and Kerseymere in the New Stakes, behind Longy and Dum Dum in the Triennial, to say nothing of his defeat by Vain Duchess in the Summer Breeders' Foal Plate at Manchester on May 24. Having written 'to say nothing,' I naturally, as so often happens in the circumstances, go on to say something, and that is that, though excuse was made for Jouvence on the ground of not being ready at Manchester, he was evidently expected to win there—in fact, was only beaten by three-quarters of a length; and that there was plenty of time for him to make up any little arrears in the way of preparation, supposing there to have been any, by the time he ran at Ascot on June 14, when again it was supposed that he had only Longy to beat, and was tolerably certain to do it. Of course Elopement may have suffered from many absolutely unnecessary hours of confinement in a stuffy horse-box on a sultry summer day, and I know that John Porter was extremely angry at the manner in which the railway people kept the horses hanging about: but I am afraid we must come to the conclusion that Elopement is not so good an animal as his friends hoped and believed. Democrat and Longy at present look about the best.

I have been reading with much interest William Caffyn's book '71 Not Out,' for though a little monotonous in places where he goes through cricket results year by year, it contains much to call forth comment and reflection. A point which one specially notes is the contrast between the records of to-day and of years ago. With regard to bowling it is noted that in 1854 George Clarke, then fifty-six years old, obtained 476 wickets at the cost of a little more than 8 runs per wicket. Wisden took 210 for an average of just under 6, and Tom Sherman 180 with an average of 5 runs, not doing quite so well as J. Grundy, who obtained 196 wickets at the cost of something *under* 5 runs per wicket. H. H. Stephenson had the same average, taking 16 fewer wickets than Grundy, and Caffyn himself took 110 wickets for an average of 4. These are figures that speak for themselves. It is worth remark, too, that the cricket season used to last much longer than it does now. It began as soon as the ground was anything like suitable, if not before, and not a few matches took

place after the middle of October. The modern craze for football, of course, limits the cricket season; but it was when cricket was played for so many months together that the bowlers of nearly forty years ago did their excellent work, without getting stale.

Many enthusiastic cricketers seem to know practically everything about the game; but probably many of my readers are not aware that Caffyn stayed in Australia on the occasion of his second visit to the Colonies, and devoted himself to teaching cricket at Melbourne and Sydney, thus, no doubt, laying the foundation for the results which we now daily see. When an English eleven first went out they had things all their own way. The visiting team's first match in Australia was against, not an eleven, but an eighteen of Melbourne. Caffyn seems generally to estimate the attendance at about 15,000—he may of course be quite right—and that was the number stated to have been present on this occasion. The eighteen made 118; the eleven followed on with 305, of which Caffyn himself contributed 79, the highest score. In their second innings the Australians could only manage to get 91, an average of just above 5 per wicket; figures which certainly look a little odd when compared with the totals the Australians are making at present! This was, if not absolutely a typical match, something not unlike one. The English went on to Beechworth, where they played twenty-two. The eleven made 264, the twenty-two 20 in their first innings (a dozen men failed to score at all) and 53 in their second. Twenty-two of Melbourne a week later did better in a drawn match, but twenty-two at Geelong were defeated by nine wickets. The Englishmen then went to Sydney, where (in the presence of the usual 15,000) they won by 48. Truly Australian cricketers have trained on since those days!

Caffyn, as a matter of course, devotes himself to the consideration of some of the burning questions of modern cricket. From one point of view it seems a little odd to complain of the 'almost unnatural state of perfection' to which modern wickets have been brought; but one knows the results. As to various methods of doing away with drawn matches, Caffyn is one of the many cricketers who approve of the suggestion that every county ground should be enclosed round to a height of about three feet and

all hits run out except those which top this barrier. 'Having to run our hits all out in the old days was, I know from experience,' he says, 'often the cause of losing our wickets. It was no easy matter to stop a shooter on the middle stump after running a six for the previous ball;' and we can well believe it. The one thing certain about alteration of the leg-before-wicket law is, that no rule will ever be formulated which will please everyone, or which will not provoke much angry discussion. This is a technical question which I have not space to discuss in detail. Caffyn is of opinion that 'the day will come when matches will have to be decided on the first innings.' He truly says that nowadays when we go to see a contest between the chief counties, it seems too much to expect that one county will beat the other. It is only the very sanguine man who anticipates anything more than an exhibition of fine batting, bowling and fielding, with a draw to follow. Of course the decision on the first innings would often be hard on some good bat who did not happen to 'come off;' but rules cannot be formulated which are not hard on somebody.

THE
BADMINTON MAGAZINE
September 1899

PARTRIDGES

BY PERCY STEPHENS

SOME years ago I formed one of a party of men seated round the smoking-room fire of a certain country house, when the conversation, which had previously touched lightly on politics, lovely woman, and the prevailing epidemic of influenza, gradually veered round, as it usually does when Englishmen are gathered together, to the all-engrossing subject of sport, and at last resolved itself into the main question of what is the most popular form of national sport, as opposed to mere pastime. As the sagacious reader will probably suppose, and possibly maintain himself, the general verdict was in favour of fox-hunting, and the present writer brought a storm of obloquy on his luckless head by suggesting partridge-shooting.

At first sight, I am bound to confess, it does seem absurd to suggest that an amusement which, however widespread, is almost entirely the prerogative, if not of the wealthy, at all events of the well-to-do, classes, should be selected as the most popular national sport; but here I would venture to point out that, with the possible exception of bottom-fishing, as practised in the Thames, or Trent, or Lea, it is only the well-to-do portion of the community that ever indulges in sport at all. I freely admit the heterogeneous character of the hunting field, but here again all who hunt are more or less endowed with the good things of this world, or they would not be able to do so. The hunting farmer

or tradesman is, at all events, in a position to purchase an keep a horse which, if not exactly the sort of animal you woul select to carry you in a fast thing from Thorp Trussels t Ranksborough, is none the less of considerable value an consequent expense to its owner, and therefore I class hin among the well-to-do. But, on the other hand, there is man a good fellow debarred by fortune or circumstances fron participating in the pleasures of fox-hunting, who, the fortunat possessor of a breechloader (and that this is lamentably chea enough nowadays who can gainsay?), and, more important still of a friend who can give him an opportunity of using it, is abl to indulge the passion for sport, happily inherent in all English men. Perhaps I write a little feelingly on this point, my ow partridge-shooting being in the vicinity of some castellate property in Iberia which I have never yet had an opportunity o visiting.

Moreover, to my mind at least, the partridge is the sparrow o game birds: he is ubiquitous. No man, however small the are over which, whether as owner or tenant, he has the right o shooting, need despair of finding partridges on it at some time o another; and from Cornwall to Caithness, and Lincoln to Llan dudno, the little brown bird provides sport for rich and poo alike. For your partridge is not one of your pampered fowls wh can only exist in certain localities or under certain conditions true, he is more numerous in some parts of the United Kingdon than others, but wherever game can possibly exist at all, there h is to be found. Probably I cannot lay claim to a more varie experience than most people, but I have shot partridges on th fringe of a Highland deer forest, and within sight of the villas o a southern watering-place; on the edge of a colliery cinder-heap with an attendant row of excited 'Geordies' betting on the shot as the birds rose; and, most extraordinary of all, to a South countryman, in the rough grass pastures of a Yorkshire dale thirteen miles from the nearest stubble field! Nay, in th capacity of a spectator, I once 'assisted' at a partridge-shoo among the vineyards which border the Lake of Geneva; but her I am bound to confess that thrushes were more numerous tha *Perdrix cinerea.*

This ubiquity of the partridge is the reason of its popu larity. It is not a creature of more or less artificial productior as the pheasant has become; it is not like the grouse, a preroga tive of the rich, confined to a more or less limited area of ou islands; it is, if I may use such an expression, the people's gam

bird, and as such it is regarded by the less opulent class of shooters with an affection as real as it is well deserved. There are hundreds, nay thousands, of good fellows in every class of life, from parsons to shopkeepers, by nature just as keen sportsmen as you, gentle reader, but who, from lack of fortune or opportunity, never got on a horse in their lives; never saw a grouse save in a poulterer's shop, and to whom the delight of the rocketing pheasant is a sealed book, who none the less contrive to have a little partridge-shooting every year, and look forward to it with a zest that sportsmen more favoured by fortune can hardly enter into.

Moreover the partridge possesses this further claim on popular affection, that there is no hard and fast rule laid down either by fashion or nature for its pursuit. You can, if you be so minded, seek to circumvent it by your own unaided efforts; you can do so with the help of dogs or beaters, or you can have the birds driven to you; and which of these methods, leaving out the first one, is the most enjoyable it is hard to say. Personally, I think all of them equally so in its own way; but each system has its votaries, and I therefore purpose to touch on each in turn.

It is, I am aware, the general custom nowadays to speak of partridge-shooting over dogs as a thing of the past, a topic which still affords frequent opportunity for those anonymous correspondents of the sporting press who profess to see in the decadence of the modern sportsman the ultimate downfall of the British Empire; but let me hasten to reassure these gentlemen by informing them that there are still many districts in the United Kingdom where the use of dogs to find game is not only usual but indispensable. Two such I have in my mind's eye at the present moment, one the beautiful downs of Hampshire and Berkshire, where you may see a Derby winner doing *his* work, before you begin *yours*; the other the glorious stretches of rough grass which border the moors of the northern counties. I know and love both districts well, but on this occasion I will ask my readers to follow me in fancy to the northern one, and to imagine that we are starting on a lovely morning early in September to shoot 'moor-edge' partridges with the aid of a couple of Laverock setters. We are only two guns, with an equal number of attendant keepers, and a pannier-laden pony to carry the game. The day promises to be hot, so I trust that you have on light clothing, and your easiest and most comfortable shoes, for I can promise you enough walking to satisfy even the most captious of those aforementioned 'decadent' critics.

As we step from the dog-cart which has brought us up to where we shall begin our day's operations, let us pause a moment to admire the view; for indeed you might search broad England and not find one more beautiful, nor more typical of our country. We are standing on a sort of tableland, and the ground falls gradually away from our very feet, until it merges into the plain of a vast level champaign. Before us, as far as the eye can reach, lie, as though on a map, well-tilled fields, and dark masses of woods, farms, and villages with their attendant church spires, and here and there the flash of a river, or the white smoke of some passing train, the whole half accentuated and half concealed by the simmering autumn heat. Behind us, however, the ground trends upwards in a succession of great stone-walled enclosures of coarse grass, wherein our day's work will lie, and beyond these again, miles upon miles of purple moorland roll on hill beyond hill to meet the gorgeous September sky.

But now let us uncouple one of our dogs and get to work. We start in a huge enclosure of rough tussocky grass, which at no very distant date was heather, of some eighty or ninety acres. A flock of black-faced sheep race across our front as Shot quarters his ground, then wheel into line, and stand watching the intruders with indignant eye and stamping foot, while a couple of unbroken hill ponies come charging down with flying mane and tail to investigate us. But, likely looking ground as it is, it is tenantless as far as game is concerned, save for an enormous hare which steals away unshot at, and so we climb over the stone wall which divides it from its neighbour—an almost exactly similar piece of rough grass, only still larger in extent.

Here we are luckier, for our dog has scarce set to work ere he stops short in his gallop, and stands with uplifted paw, as motionless as though carved in stone, every muscle in his body rigid with excitement, and his eye fixed on a rushy patch of grass thirty yards before him: a really beautiful point. Then, as we approach, he draws slowly forward, till, with a sudden whirr and scream, that sets even the oldest sportsman's pulse beating a turn quicker, rises a great covey of fifteen strong, lusty partridges; three of which get up but to fall almost as quickly. Nor is this the only good fortune that awaits us in this field—or, to give it its proper name, allotment; we bag another two brace out of a fresh covey, while a vagrant snipe takes two barrels ere it is brought to bag. Both coveys are marked down at no great distance, and as we have bagged the old hen bird of each, we are hopeful we shall get the young birds 'broken up.' Nor are we disappointed in our

'TOWERED'

expectations; deprived of parental advice and control, the young birds lie like stones among the rough ankle-deep herbage, and afford as pretty a bit of point-shooting as the heart of man can desire. Your 'driving' enthusiast may sneer at this sort of thing as mere 'plastering,' and possibly the birds as they rise singly do not afford the most difficult of shots; but to my mind, at all events, it is charming shooting, and not the least delightful part of it is to watch the careful way in which Shot puzzles out the lurking partridges. Now one gets up to your left front, and as you drop him with your first barrel, another fat young rascal that you have actually walked over rises shrieking behind you, and makes back towards his native field. Bang! but your foot slipped with the suddenness of your turn, and so you shoot under him, and he escapes unscathed; yet somehow or another you hardly feel annoyed that he has done so. Then, as you are reloading, another bird rises to your companion, and at the sound of his gun two or three more whirr up before you. You fumble away with your cartridges, having only just time to put in one barrel before the birds are out of shot, and at first you think this has been a miss also. But the bird you fired at, gradually leaves its companions, mounting higher and higher in the air, and with a feeling of relief you mutter 'towered,' and shout to your companion to 'mark that bird.'

'Plastering' this may possibly be, but it is nevertheless very pleasant work, with a very satisfactory result; for even at this early stage of the season, five brace of moor-edge partridges are not often bagged in the first three-quarters of an hour; they are birds which early in life learn to take very good care of their precious little bodies.

Of this we receive convincing proof as the day wears on, for we gradually recognise that the partridges, grasping the situation, decline to be broken up, and in some instances to be even shot at at all; disappearing over one boundary wall of a field as we enter by the other; while coveys which have been forced to yield toll of their number, no longer drop in confiding fashion a few fields ahead of us, but swing off the hill into the valley below; until at last the keeper informs us that 'the bords are arl ma-a-kin' awey intee Tommy Ba-ates' tornops,' and that we must 'gan doon bank (down hill) efter them.'

Now Tommy Bates' turnip field is the Mecca of every partridge in the parish, presumably because it is the only piece of arable land in it. We can see it from where we stand, a patch of purple amid the emerald green of the dale, and between us and it lies a

full mile of hot, steep hill-side. Still, there is nothing for it but to follow our birds, and so we reluctantly make our way down after them. Nor have we much hope of sport to encourage us. In those five acres of plough that Tommy Bates has laboriously wrested from these upland pastures, there must now be congregated very nearly a hundred partridges; and experience has taught us that the first rustle of our feet among the turnips will be the signal for the birds to rise with one accord at the other end of the field, to once more seek the upper ground we have just quitted. But Harry, our keeper, is a man of resource, who proceeds, not unsuccessfully, to put into practice a favourite dodge of his, which I have never seen anyone else employ. As we approach the turnips, he bids us pause, and going forward by himself, walks slowly round the entire circuit of the field, whistling as he goes in an unconcerned sort of manner—a proceeding which, he stoutly avers, leads the partridges to suppose that they are surrounded on all sides by enemies, and induces them to prefer concealment to flight. At all events, his manœuvre is so far successful on this occasion that, although the birds do not lie like the proverbial stone, we bag three brace where we expected to get none, and so, well pleased with ourselves, we sit down to eat our lunch by the side of the babbling trout stream that laves old Bates' farm.

Enjoyable as our morning's sport has been, it is, I venture to think, surpassed by the afternoon's; when, after a laborious climb which makes us regret the excellence of the cake with which we topped up our lunch, we have regained the higher ground. Perhaps, too, the last hour's sport when we have turned for home is the pleasantest of all. As the glowing sun sinks lower and lower behind the western moors, the air grows deliciously cool and keen, removing all sense of bodily fatigue. The dew has already begun to fall, and a faint thymy smell arises from the herbage as we crush it beneath our feet. Below us the great plain is already wreathed in swathes and bands of pearly mist, but at this height the atmosphere is still clear and golden, while on all sides resounds the plaintive chirrup of calling partridges, and although we heed not the voice of the charmer, save when it lies in our direct path, we get, none the less, some delightful shooting to finish up with. But Shot, and Rake, his brother, have had an even harder day than ourselves, and show unmistakable signs of fatigue, so let us withdraw our cartridges before we make our way back to the farmhouse where the dog-cart is awaiting us. As we light our pipes and don our overcoats the panniers are emptied, with a result of seventeen brace of

partridges, two snipe, a golden plover, and some ground game; a bag at which some *fin de siècle* shooters may turn up their noses, but one with which we ourselves are perfectly satisfied; for we feel that we have honestly earned every item of it.

Walking up partridges without the aid of dogs is not a form of shooting over which one can raise a great amount of enthusiasm. Given plenty of birds, it is a pleasant enough diversion, but it lacks the special charm attached to point-shooting over dogs, without, on the other hand, affording the delightful shots obtained by driving. Even its most ardent admirers must admit that to walk in line through turnip field after turnip field, while beaters religiously drive the stubbles for you, is not a very high form of sport; it is only really enjoyable when there is a great quantity of game, and when the whole proceeding is properly carried out. This, too, is not so simple as it seems, and, personally, I only know of one place where walking up partridges is conducted to perfection. The party never consists of more than four guns, to each of whom is allotted two small boys who walk on either side of him, and whose business it is to attend only to their special gun, and, above all, to mark his dead birds. Every boy gets a holiday from school for the day, but is warned that if he shouts 'mark' when a bird rises, speaks without cause, or fails to recover three dead birds during the day, he will be at once sent home, thereby losing, not only his holiday, but his tip as well. These rules have been rigidly enforced for years, with the result that now they never have to send a boy home.

Let us, however, pass on to what is certainly the most fashionable, if not the most popular, form of partridge-shooting nowadays—namely, driving. It would probably be far more generally practised than it is, were it not for the fact that the three cardinal essentials for partridge-driving are not within everybody's reach. These are, first, great quantities of birds; secondly, a suitable country for driving them in; and, thirdly, and most important of all, a head keeper who understands the art of doing so. Given, however, these conditions, there is no more delightful form of *artificial* sport, except grouse-driving.

Let us therefore imagine ourselves to be assisting at a partridge-drive on a dull, cloudy day in the first week of October, but in a very different country from that where we had such good fun over dogs last month. Save for a gentle acclivity about half the height of St. Paul's, and which the natives of these parts regard with much the same veneration that a Scotchman does Ben Nevis, not a hill breaks the monotony of the level cham-

paign; on all sides, flat, well-tilled corn and turnip fields stretch away to where a faint grey line on the horizon marks the North Sea, with scarce a landmark more important than a windmill or a clump of trees to relieve the dead level of the vast plain.

> On either side the river lie
> Long fields of barley and of rye,
> That clothe the wold, and meet the sky.

We are a party of six guns, each with his attendant loader and dog, ranged at regular intervals behind a long belt of Scotch firs, which, planted specially with a view to partridge-driving, here takes the place of a more stereotyped fence. Owing to its height we all stand about twenty yards back from it, pegs stuck in the ground marking our allotted stations, for which we have already drawn lots.

We—that is you, who are going to shoot, and I, who am going to look on—are on the extreme right of the line, not perhaps the most likely place for much shooting, but whence, as the line of guns is on a gentle slope, we can survey the other members of the party at our ease. It is amusing to watch the various attitudes they assume; one clutches his gun and stares stedfastly in front of him as though determined not to be caught napping; another of more phlegmatic temperament is coolly perusing some letters he had not time to finish before leaving home; a third is actually engrossed in the columns of the morning's paper, doubtless—*o tempora, o mores*—anxious as to the state of the 'Kaffir' market, or the price of the favourite for next week's Cesarewitch; while the remainder of the party squatted on their shooting-sticks are either conversing with their loaders, or enjoying their post-prandial pipes.

But hark! there is a gentle rustling in the fence, and presently a soft brown nose is poked out, and inquisitively sniffs the air, while a pair of long ears work anxiously back and forwards. The wind is toward us, and we remain perfectly still, so presently a great bouncing hare steals quietly out. It comes carelessly on, until just as it is passing you, you make a half turn towards it. Then in a moment its ears go flat back on its shoulders; its easy canter is exchanged for a frenzied gallop; we seem almost to catch the agonised gleam of its eye as it awakes to its danger; and next moment your gun rings out, the hare turns a complete somersault, and lies, an ungainly lump of brown fur, motionless on the grass. Ah well! it was a painless death, better after all than the poacher's snare or the fox's jaws.

A RUNNER

But the report of your gun has had an extraordinary effect on our neighbours, who, engrossed in their own affairs, have not noticed this little tragedy; each springs to attention, letters are shoved into pockets, pipes are knocked out, and almost simultaneously a faint cry of 'M-a-ark over, left,' comes down wind. This will not concern us on the right—woe betide the luckless beater who forgets that his right is our left!—so we anxiously watch the other end of the line. Being on rather higher ground we can see the covey before the gun to whom it is heading on the extreme left flank, nearly three hundred yards away. As the birds top the firs, two of their number drop as if by magic, two little puffs of smoke rise in the air, a second later the two reports of the gun reach us, and ere these have died away the sportsman has got his second gun and repeated the operation, for this gentleman is a past-master of the art of killing driven partridges.

'Well shot!' we mutter enviously; but it does not do to mind your neighbours' affairs to the detriment of your own in partridge-driving, any more than in other walks of life. Wh-i-r-r-r, a brace of old, and probably barren birds, flash over the fence, and dropping as they do so, are on you before you know 'where you are.' Bang—a clean miss with the first barrel—you *were* a little bit flustered, you know. Bang—a very long shot with the second, but a good one, for the bird is down, though I am afraid it is a runner. Sure enough there it goes, but the grass is short, and Sam the retriever sees it—slip him at once, as the drive has hardly begun. Sam is off like a shot; there is a hurried chase, a quick turn and a wrench, a sudden pounce, and back he comes at a gallop with the bird in his mouth.

'Mark over right!' Look out, this means us; and even as you bring your gun to the ready a great covey comes beautifully over the fence, straight to your front, and, scared by the flash of the barrels in the sun, bursts like a shell all around you. Never mind; keep your eye on the bird you originally marked. Well done!—he's down; now take that one right above you. Good shot! Quick with that other gun. You needn't have wasted that fourth cartridge—the bird you fired at was at least seventy yards away; but never mind, you have three down, all as dead as door-nails, and well killed too.

Here is a nice shot coming, a single bird. What a height it is—as tall as a rocketing pheasant! Well shot indeed!—you got him just in the right place, as one can see by the little neck feathers floating lazily about. What a satisfactory 'wop' he came down! he may be an old bird, but he ought to be tender enough after that fall. Talking of pheasants, here comes one driven out of

yonder turnips. You had better kill it—it is an outlying bird of no use for covert shooting. There, you needn't strain your eyes after it any longer—you missed clean with both barrels; those shots at low-flying crossing pheasants are not so easy as they look.

There is nothing coming our way just at present, so let us watch old W——, the next gun, for a moment. He is getting all the shooting this drive, but what a treat it is to see him! His action is perfectly machine-like—up goes his gun quick as lightning, but without a trace of undue hurry or excitement, and down comes the bird as if by magic. He never has a 'runner,' and you will find all his dead birds within a radius of fifty yards. The most remarkable thing to me is the sympathy between him and his loader, who, like his master, never seems to be flustered or to lose his head, but always has a loaded gun ready. It must have cost both of them years of patience to acquire that automaton-like regularity of drill.

Halloa! this sounds like something coming our way by the noise our flankers are making. Listen to old George, the head keeping, adjuring the beaters to 'Hold 'em up, d—— ye!' Ah! I thought so, much cry with driven partridges generally produces little wool; that covey has broken clean out, and we shan't see it again to-day. Never mind, here's a nice lot coming straight for you. You got the first bird neatly enough, as it topped the fence (I wonder if the horseshoe on its breast caught your eye as distinctly as it did mine?), but your other three barrels only resulted in one 'pricked' bird, which, alas! has 'carried on.' Well, the man who never misses has yet to be born, and now you have redeemed your miss by that excellent right and left at that pair of birds just slipping away at the corner of the field.

I am afraid you won't get many more chances this drive, as I can hear the beaters in the next field, and—halloa! look out!—here's a lot of birds which had come forward and settled in front of the guns. Here they come scattering and screaming like little feathered bombshells. There, you have got a brace down in front of you, and you have hit a third bird hard. Give it another barrel—you must have missed. No; see, it is beginning to tower. Mark it! All right; it has fallen by that distant flanker. There, the man has held up his hand to show he sees it.

Well, that makes five and a half brace as your contribution to the total of the drive—not at all bad for an outside gun, but about a third of what old W—— has killed down below. After all, however good a shot he may be, he had all the luck that time; and perhaps this may be yours in the next drive.

GALANTUOMO

BY GUY CADOGAN ROTHERY

'FORD! you're a dreamy, lazy poet!'

Percy Roe's glance was full of melancholy reproach as he stepped up to his friend, and, with the toe of his heavy boot, raked together a heap of glowing embers beneath the slowly twirling brace of birds suspended by a cord from a tripod of rough sticks.

'Star-gazing, and positively allowing the *rôti* to spoil.'

'Some excuse for me, Roe; look at that glorious scene!'

A dense ring of gigantic black larch trees surrounded the broad expanse of velvety turf on which the two men stood. The forest stretched far in all directions, spreading out like a carpet over the lower ranges of hills and valley slopes. Above them gaunt grey mountains towered; their rugged outlines, sharply defined against a steel-blue sky, glowed fiery red under the magic touch of the setting sun. Lower down a patch of vivid pink capped a snowfield, which, crushed in between a mighty crevice, became a dark azure floe of weirdly glittering ice. Under the soft evening breeze the larches swayed backwards and forwards, murmuring and sighing, waving their tasselled heads. It was a glorious sight, one of the most beautiful to be met with in this most enchanting district of the Maritime Alps.

But it must be confessed that Roe's eyes rested with greater satisfaction on the log hut close at hand and the fantastically gyrating, bobbing birds, dancing temptingly brown amidst the *feu de joie* of sparks darting up from the freshly added juniper branches.

Michel Manosque came up with a pannikin of water, and brought with him a well-filled haversack. Quickly he spread on

the grass brown bread, hard-boiled eggs, pepper and salt, cakes of stony cheese, and gourds of sour wine—a hunters' feast to which all honour was done. Pipes were lit, and then Michel retreated to the hut; but Ford and Roe preferred to bivouac outside, dreading the 'light infantry and heavy artillery' which the dingy mattresses and greasy blankets so alarmingly suggested.

Our story deals with a happier time than the present, a couple of decades ago or more, when hunters and *messieurs les étrangers* could roam about these regions—as yet unspoiled by fortresses and Alpine regiments—as fancy dictated. In the sheltered valleys one found the summer quarters of cowherds, where travellers, willing to accept rough hospitality and a shake-down in the sweet-smelling hayloft, were ever welcome. The forests were given over to woodmen, forest guards, and native sportsmen. Chamois abounded on the higher ranges; lynx hid in the rocky, bush-tangled gorges; marmots played hide and seek on the grassy plateaux; eagles soared over rugged crags, finding abundant prey. Lakes and streams were full of trout. Few people knew of these delights, so there was happiness for the select circle of *cognoscenti*. Roe and Ford, having met at Nice one of the Forest Conservators, had been tempted by the good man's tales. Procuring introductions and permissions to make use of the Forest Administration huts, they journeyed up to St. Martin Lantosque, and there secured Michel Manosque (most celebrated of *chasseurs*) as their guide and gillie.

'With your permits,' the Conservator had said, 'you can go where you like, and do pretty much what you will; but if you cross the frontier into Italy, leave your guns on the French side. For, although communal rights of pastorage and forestry overlap the borders, hunting is strictly preserved in Piedmont.'

Such restrictions laid lightly on our friends, whose eyes were made joyous by the endless vistas of forests, valleys, and mountain peaks. Rolled in blankets, with their feet to the fire, they dreamed of toils, difficulties overcome, and lucky shots. Michel was up with the break of day, and while his masters trudged off for a dip in the icy torrent below, he boiled some coffee and prepared breakfast. The chamois-hunter does not care for dogs, preferring to trust to his own intelligence and keen sight; besides, the ground to be covered is too perilous for the most sagacious of canine friends. Occasionally a stray chamois may be discovered in a forest glade or valley, but, as a rule, he must be pursued on the barren mountain sides, feeding on scanty aromatic plants, or indulging in sweeter grass in a hidden gorge, surrounded by

precipitous crags, the horizontal clefts worn into ragged shelves by snow and torrential rains, thus furnishing precarious footholds for adventurous explorers.

Michel was in a hurry to reach likely ground. He led the way through great aisles formed by arched boughs of the sombre trees to the barren land beyond. An early tramp is nearly always a silent affair, and on this occasion the three men were too eager for what might befall them to pay much attention to their surroundings. Leaving behind the mossy carpets and canopy of larches, a broad strip of short, wiry grass lay before them, and then, as the ascent became steeper, vegetation became scarce, the ground being covered with great loose boulders and sharp stones, over which travelling was slow and wearisome. However, out in the open there was more light, which assisted them somewhat. To right and left two tall peaks reared their snow-capped heads. Clambering along the crest of a ravine the party skirted the darkly glittering glacier and blinding snowfield, and presently gained a lofty ridge, which, like a causeway, united the two peaks. This natural gateway between the ranges was evidently much frequented by cattle, but close scrutiny revealed the recent passage of chamois. Looking south-west from the narrow pass the forest belts above the Rivieran coast could be seen, with the Mediterranean in the far distance; to the north-east the eye was perplexed by endless ranges of bleak mountains, with here and there a white patch of snow, or the steely mirror of a cliff-pent tarn. The sun was up, gilding the higher crags, but leaving grass and valleys in semi-darkness. Michel decided to plunge into the mysterious shadows below them to the east. With many a precaution they descended, and then entering a valley, commenced to follow its upward course. Here the trace of game became marked, and the three men halted to prepare for emergencies; and then, onwards once more. Observing the greatest caution, the advance was made noiselessly, in spite of the steepness and roughness of the way. They were approaching the summit of one of the lesser peaks, the slopes of which were partly covered with scanty vegetation, with here and there a few purple or dark-blue blossoms. Ford was close behind Michel, and on the latter's suggestion crept higher up while Roe advanced on a lower level, for the game ought to be close at hand. In these relative positions the men crawled onwards to gain the eastern slope, fully expecting to find their quarry at breakfast. Suddenly there was a crash of rolling stones, a rush, and Ford felt himself knocked head over heels. Michel and Roe had risen,

faced about, raised their guns and fired—without doing any damage to the herd of six chamois, which could be seen bounding away in the distance. Michel had not been mistaken, the game was near at hand, only the herd had been higher up than could be expected. Having caught sight of the hunters, they had bolted, overturning poor Ford in their stampede. So unexpected was this assault, that both Michel and Roe, turning swiftly, but with rather an unsteady footing, missed their aim. It is rarely possible to have a second shot at flying chamois, so rapid are their movements and so peculiar is the ground over which they travel.

'Well, I'm hanged!' Ford rose, ruefully rubbing his head, glancing from the peak above to the valley below. 'Chamois!'

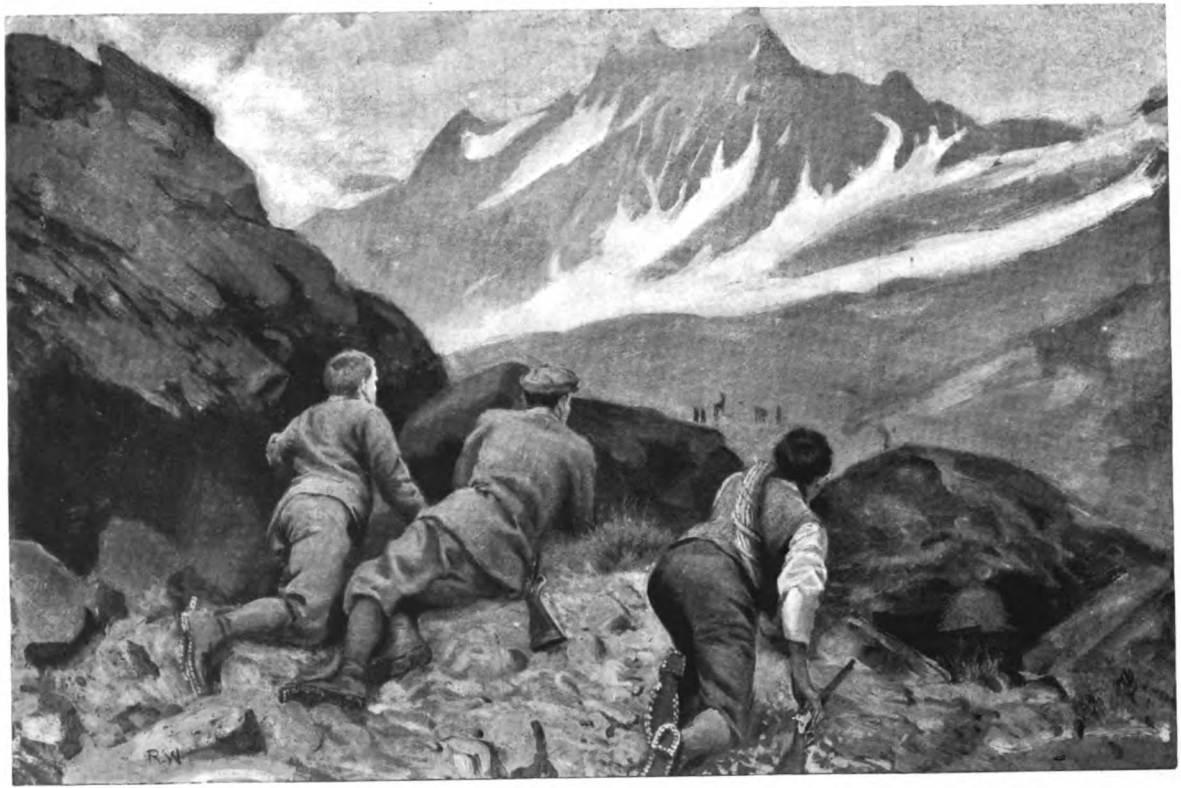
'Yes, old chap; why the dickens didn't you catch hold of it—running right into your arms like that?'

'Only once before have I seen such a thing.' Michel was as dumfounded as his companions. 'I was taking a party of English schoolboys over Punta Argenterra. We crept up through a dense white mist, and on a sudden, out of the woolly clouds sprang three chamois, positively brushing past one of the lads. Of course, I had no gun with me that day.'

'Well, what is to be done now, Michel?'

'Retrace our steps and try to pick up our game in one of yonder valleys.'

It was the only chance, so the three men travelled over the rough ground as quickly as they could; weary work, seeming to hold slight promise of success. However, towards midday their perseverance was rewarded. Climbing along a jagged water-course, carved out by snow waters from solid rock, Michel led his two companions in an eastward direction up the spur of a snow-capped mountain, but gradually nearing a deep ravine. Peeping over the rocky parapet of their uncomfortable pathway, they saw a small herd of chamois grazing on the short grass and tufts of edelweiss. Though the distance was rather too great to please the hunters, it seemed impossible to diminish it without certainty of alarming the chamois. Hurried consultation ended in a decision to try their luck where they were. All three took careful aim, and fired very nearly simultaneously. Roe had selected the great buck, standing proudly aloof, hardly attempting to feed while anxiously on the watch. Ford and Manosque had chosen their animals, and apparently all three were successful, for two chamois leapt in the air and fell over not to move again; but Roe's huge fellow had turned a regular somersault, bounded



PEEPING OVER THE ROCKY PARAPET THEY SAW A SMALL HERD OF CHAMOIS GRAZING ON THE SHORT GRASS AND TUFTS OF EDELWEISS

up, and followed the four leaping youngsters of the herd, over the opposite spur and away out of sight, before anybody had time to reload. Roe swore loudly at the stupid local custom of allowing guides to actively join in such sport. He would have given anything for a third loaded gun ready at hand. But traces of blood were too noticeable not to give hopes, so the three men scrambled down to the valley, clinging to the rocks and blindly seeking a safe foothold in the almost sheer face of the rock. This safely done, they crawled up the opposite side on all fours, and rushed over the crest in hot pursuit. No chamois were visible, though the trail of blood encouraged them to persevere on their difficult chase. Suddenly they were startled by a loud report in front of them and a little to their right.

'Poachers, by Jove! Come on, Ford!'

Roe dashed on followed by a very lively poet, all sleepiness vanished, crying out lustily:

'Look at the beggars, actually running to steal our game! Don't let them escape, Michel!'

But Manosque had stood still when startled by the shot, and when he saw four men popping up from behind rocks and coming towards them, he turned tail and bolted. Unaware of this desertion, Ford and Roe dashed on and took possession of their quarry.

'Deuced cheek!' cried Roe crimson with passion; 'they have actually shot my chamois!' and with foot on the fallen beast he shook his fist at the advancing men.

They came on nothing daunted, gesticulating and shouting out in Italian. The leader was a short, thickly built man, with bushy moustache meeting and mingling in a fierce pair of whiskers. He ran up to the two Englishmen and apostrophised them in no measured terms, calling on his companions to advance. Roe turned round to look for Manosque. He was quickly seized and disarmed. Ford was also set upon, but he struggled hard and his rifle went off with a bang, luckily doing no damage.

'Brigands, Ford! Well, this is pleasant! Where's that scamp Michel?'

Ford, firmly pinioned, looked ruefully at his friend, and feeling the rough shake of his captors when they heard the word 'brigands,' he begged Roe to keep calm. Meanwhile the dark, thick-set, fierce leader gave hasty instructions, and two of his men made off in the direction taken by Michel. Then turning to the chamois, he examined it carefully, looking first at his own shot, which had caught the animal exactly in front of the shoulder-

blade, and then at the wound made by Roe's bullet, which had gone clean through the beast, just below the spinal column. He frowned heavily and shook his fist at the indignant sportsman. Ford's guardian was a tall, fair-haired, ruddy-cheeked fellow, big of limb and clear of eye. He wore a strange kind of uniform, with a formidable hunting-knife in his girdle. This fellow seemed to be somewhat nervous; he spoke respectfully to his chief, pointing to the sky, which was becoming rapidly overcast, rolling clouds massing together and completely hiding the snow cap above them. Moustachios nodded and muttered something, and his companion at once fired in the air. Soon after the other two men returned, but without Michel. Seizing the dead chamois and forcing Roe and Ford before them, the party scrambled up the valley side, seeking refuge behind great boulders just in time, for with a loud accompaniment of thunder and vivid flashes of lightning down came the hail with relentless fury. Crouching as near the rocks as they could, the six men were speedily wet to the skin, the huge sharp hailstones actually drawing blood from the cheeks and hands of our two friends. It seemed endless. As it became darker the Italians shouted to each other, endeavouring to make themselves heard above the deafening reverberations of the quick succeeding claps of thunder. Some decision was arrived at. Two of the men seized their game. Moustachios and the fourth fellow signed to Ford and Roe to accompany them, making it plain that they would stand no nonsense. If the ascent early in the morning had been difficult, this descent was perilous in the extreme. Water swept down over the slippery rocks, the hail was blinding, and the noise deafening. It seemed foolhardy to move, and certainly all attempt at escape was utterly out of the question. Ford and Roe only desired to lie down flat and cling to some heavy rock. But the men persisted in their retreat, keeping, however, on the elevated spur, well out of the hollowed watercourses, which were now overflowing, hissing with dirty foam. Presently they seemed to approach a dead wall, along which they groped their way, until one of the men stood aside and pushed Mr. Moustachios into a cavern, the others tumbling in after him. This place, though small, was dry, and apparently had been used as a kind of lair, for there was an abundance of dry grass and wood, with which a roaring bonfire was soon lit. Evidently receiving permission from his chief, one of the men made an incision in Roe's chamois, and removing part of the skin, cut out huge collops, which were at once grilled over the embers. Bread and

wine being forthcoming from haversacks, all set to with a will. Our friends received their shares gladly, for they felt exhausted and famished. Revived by the warmth, the generous wine, and hot meat, Ford looked around him approvingly. He admired the picture made by the men lying on grass in the glare of a huge fire, which lit up the dark, smoke-begrimed cavern, while outside rain fell incessantly, thunder roared, and water rushed hissing by.

'A charming ending to a day's sport, Roe. This is pleasanter than we had any right to expect an hour ago.'

'Don't holloa until we're out of—the cavern. The fun is only just begun. Holloa, Moustachios, do you understand English? *Parlez-vous français?*' Roe slapped the broad-shouldered leader familiarly on the back.

Moustachios frowned, and his followers looked inclined to violently resent the levity. But a word from the chief allayed the rising anger, and the friends were answered in Italian, which was incomprehensible to them. But from the amused expression of Moustachios, and the twinkling of his eyes, Roe felt almost certain that he understood French, if not English. So he offered his captor a pipe of tobacco and asked him if he was dreaming of ransom. Moustachios quietly took a leather cigar-case from his pocket, concealing with his sun-tanned paw a golden monogram on the side, and offered Ford and his companion excellent Havanas.

'Loot, old chap? *Voleur, vous savez!*' explained Ford.

The heavy brows met, the dark eyes glared, then gleamed with fun, as a broad smile parted the hirsute lips.

'Thought you understood. Look here, if you are sensible, we'll be good friends and say nothing about your poaching.'

'Be careful, Ford; he doesn't quite like your chaff, and may cut up rough at any moment.'

However, Ford persisted in carrying on his Anglo-French badinage, while the victim of his wit continued to smile, nod, and occasionally utter monosyllables in Italian. At first the other men had eyed the Englishmen askance, but apparently entering into the joke, which so mightily tickled their leader, they leant back, puffed their pipes, and, nudging each other, conversed in whispers or laughed at the quiet rejoinders.

Presently one of the men went to the mouth of the cave, surveyed the scene, and reported progress. The leader got up, looking disturbed, peered out, and then spoke rapidly as he paced nervously up and down. Some of the men appeared to try to

allay his anxiety, but he pointed down the valley and talked quickly and with considerable emotion. Somehow or other Ford and Roe understood that they were discussing the probability of disastrous floods, though the fear seemed to be for others.

'It's bad enough up here, Roe; but we saw it coming. Heaven help the shepherds in the valleys if they are taken unawares!'

It is impossible to say who gave the order, but presently all six men had left the cave, and in Indian file were tramping, leaping, slipping down the mountain side, ankle deep in water,

FORD PLUNGED INTO THE FOAMING FLOOD

drenched by descending sheets of rain, bewildered by incessant glare of lightning, followed by peal after peal of thunder fiercely echoing from valley to valley. Still they clung together, hurrying madly along; panting, cursing, praying; gasping for breath, dextrously balancing themselves on the slippery stones, trying to resist the buffeting of wind and rain. Before them, far below, a fitful glare shot up, was obscured, and then flared out again. As they sped downward the glare increased; men were seen dashing about, heaping fuel on the fires; a confused murmur reached the ears of the newcomers. They mixed in a crowd of men and women. Many of the men wore uniforms; an officer

was giving orders. Down on the slope, surrounded by swirling waters, in the pitchy darkness, was all that now remained of a cowherds' summer settlement.

'Heap up the fuel!'

Flames shot up, and the glare revealed an angry flood battling round a log hut, on whose roof men, women, and children had taken refuge. Hoarse cries and rough commands were borne away by the shrieking wind. Men, knee-deep in the yellow water, were fishing out corpses. Ford caught hold of Roe and shouted in his ear. He rushed to a soldier and seized a rope, but was hustled roughly aside. He clung to the rope. Roe, picking up a strong military leather belt, buckled it round his friend. Suddenly Moustachios came forward, understanding what was meant. The soldier gave up his rope, falling backwards, with hand to his uncovered pate. Others rushed forward, the officer amidst them, and there were cries of '*Il Re!*' But Ford and Roe were too excited to pay much heed. Rushing some distance above the doomed hut, with rope fastened to his waist, Ford plunged into the foaming flood. He could do nothing to guide himself, the stream bore him along, rolling him over, dashing him against logs and the soft bodies of dead sheep. A heavy thud; gasping, bruised, bleeding, he caught frantically at the logs. The flames flared, and showed him, livid, against the hut. Willing hands dragged him on the roof—Ford and the rope, which meant possibility of life. It was all very quickly done. Children, women, and men were cradled to safety along that rope, Ford coming last, welcomed by painfully eager hands, hysterical shouts, and demonstrative embraces. Half unconscious he was led by the officer and Roe to Moustachios, who, unfastening a glittering decoration from the captain's breast, pinned it on Ford's drenched shirt, and then straightway fell weeping on his neck.

Ford was ill, and knew not how he was got down to Coni and so away to Genoa and Nice. But he knows now that his Alpine shooting excursion was not a mere nightmare, for he has a beautiful cross hanging from a blue ribbon locked in his desk, and Roe's chamois-head, with its gracefully curved black horns, looks down upon him mildly from over the mantelpiece.

Well, it is something to remember that meeting with stout old Galantuomo, though poaching on a king's preserves is not an experience to be lightly courted every day.

ENGLISH AND AMERICAN GAMES AND PASTIMES

BY PRICE COLLIER

It may be of some interest and of some service to lovers of manly sport, both in England and America, to put before them certain essential and fundamental differences between sport as conducted in England and in America. In these days of a constantly increasing number of international contests between the amateurs of the two countries, it is well that performers and spectators alike should know something of the auspices, social, philosophic, and even economic, under which games and pastimes are indulged in in the two countries.

Both Englishmen and Americans may be credited equally with a sportsmanlike desire to judge each other fairly, and fail withal to do so through sheer ignorance each of the other's environment. It is not enough to be thoroughly familiar with the technical rules of boating, yachting, tennis, cricket, base-ball, golf, and track-racing; for such imperfect knowledge, if we may call it so for purposes of this discussion, gives one no insight whatsoever into the more fundamental matters which make it not only a possibility, but a fact, that English and American youths may play the same or similar games under the same or similar rules, and yet with widely different aims and feelings.

Sport in England is a much more serious and a much more widely distributed interest than in America. In England some form of sport is either the reminiscence or the avocation of practically every man who has been, or is, physically capable of

playing a game. In America the active participants in any form of sport are, relatively to the population, much fewer in numbers.

Englishmen have come to look upon sport as a character, as well as a physical developing factor, in civilisation; while the interest of the majority of Americans is confined to the excitement expected from a contest. Many Americans, particularly in the West, look upon these international yachting and other contests almost as though they were serious battles, and are elated or depressed accordingly; while the majority of Englishmen, though eager to win, welcome these contests as being good for the sports and games themselves, by introducing fresh blood and new interests.

Let me put it more clearly by saying that the proportion of the spectators at Lord's on the day of the University or Public School cricket matches, who have themselves played the game, is much larger than the proportion of spectators present at a base-ball match between Harvard and Yale. Or again, out of the Etón and Harrow 'elevens,' the fathers of twenty and possibly the grandfathers of fifteen of the boy players have themselves been cricketers—some of them even of sufficient prowess to be on their school eleven. Of the last year's Harvard and Yale base-ball nines, probably not one of the eighteen youths had both a father and grandfather who had played on the University nine, and there were few whose fathers even had been experts at the game. Though Americans believe, or pretend to believe, with Cicero, that every man begins his own ancestry, one is forced to admit that a game with a long ancestry of tradition will differ in all probability from a game with little or none. It must be admitted, too, that a lad whose father and grandfather, whose uncles and brothers, all play some game or take an interest in some form of sport, will grow up to look upon sport differently from a lad whose relatives take little or no serious interest in any game. Englishmen seldom realise that sport lacks entirely this atmosphere of almost sacred tradition in America, and Americans forget that in England some form of sport is one of the serious occupations of many, and the serious avocation of the majority of the able-bodied. It is only two centuries and a half ago that the settlers of New England ran away from sport in England to found a Commonwealth, where no lighter diversion than the drowning of witches and the cropping of Quakers' ears was countenanced. At a time when English parsons and schoolmasters were some of them playing cricket on Sunday afternoons, and some of them hunting three days a week throughout the hunting season, their representatives in America who should have attempted to imitate such enjoyments

would have been ridden out of their parishes on rails, or confined in mad-houses. In America to-day it would be difficult to find a clergyman over sixty years of age who had been a famous athlete in his college days; in England even the stranger can count such by the score.

This ancestry of sport marks a difference in the way we Americans look at sport, and it also marks a very great difference in the auspices under which we practise it. In America boys play with boys almost exclusively; even a professional coach for crew or ball nine is a source of much discussion and dissension. English schools have not one but several professionals, and what is most important of all, *English boys play their games, part of the time at least, with men.* Old Carthusians, old Etonians, old Wykehamists, go back to play their school eleven or their school football team; old University men play the youngsters, country gentlemen have house parties of cricketers, and the writer only the other day had the pleasure to play against a team at a country house where the host of fifty kept wicket, and captained an eleven no member of which was under forty; and it is with mingled feelings of pleasure and pain that he adds that they won. This fact alone, of the participation of the adult and middle-aged element so universally in English sport, accounts for a very wide difference in the way in which sport is looked upon and the way in which the games are played. Where boys and youths are accustomed to play their games—cricket more particularly—with grown men, it introduces an element of sobriety, courtesy, and reticence into their play and behaviour, which must be lacking to some extent among boys and youths who play exclusively among themselves. Games played under such auspices assume their rational place, and receive their proper relative value in life; for men do not feel defeat so keenly, nor do they look upon victory as the greatest of all achievements. Men play for the game's sake, while boys are apt to play exclusively to win. In England games may be said to receive their status and character from mature men; in America it is the boys who give our games their status and character.

In England, as a result of this, there is a very large and mature public thoroughly conversant with the rules, precedents and traditions of their games and sports, and the English Press, following this lead, differs from the American Press in its comments, criticisms and descriptions, in much the same degree that the English players differ from the American players, viz. in their sobriety, courtesy, and reticence. The writer makes no doubt that he has the sympathy of all sportsmanlike Americans in

saying that the blatant and puerile excuses and accusations of a portion of the American Press, in regard to the defeat of the Cornell crew at Henley a few years ago, was a grief and disappointment. But when there was added to this letters to the newspapers from trainer, and parents, and the boys themselves, the disappointment became disgust. Americans could not help feeling as one would feel should his own boy go to visit at a friend's house and misbehave himself to the extent of throwing discredit upon his own home. Here was a fitting example of the fact already described, that we in America leave the whole domain of sports and pastimes entirely too much in the hands of professionals and undeveloped boys.

It is true that to some extent, particularly in these latter days, at Harvard, Yale, and Princeton, the college contests and their arrangement have had the great advantage of the superintendence of an advisory board of college officials and college graduates. But every one must realise the difference between advice from the outside and example by participation in the games themselves. It is just therein that the English games and players have an advantage over our own. The masters at the large public schools in England play with the boys almost daily; during their holidays these same boys play with their elder brothers, with their fathers, and their fathers' friends, and I recall one instance of a grandfather who plays cricket with sons and grandsons. In America, with the exception of a few of our big boys' boarding schools, modelled somewhat upon the lines of the English public schools, there is almost none of this active participation in the boys' games by older men.

The results of this difference between the English and American method are many and manifold. Seldom a year passes in America but there is friction, discussion, and even displays of bad temper about the arrangements for, and the carrying out of, our inter-collegiate games. Harvard will not play Yale at football, or Princeton declines to play Harvard at base-ball; the smaller colleges grumble at the arrangements made by the larger colleges, and they quarrel among themselves to boot. What men can fairly play, and what men cannot; whether this man or that has had his expenses paid at this or that college merely to get him for the base-ball or football team, or the crew; which teams shall play on a given date, where most gate-money is expected—these and many other matters of a most unsportsmanlike character come up for acrimonious discussion, which never ought to arise between gentlemen at all.

The games themselves are played during the exciting and decisive moments amid a yelling, howling, and cheering that would discredit an Omaha dance among Sioux Indians, and, not infrequently, this pandemonium is methodically let loose at a time when it will most seriously disconcert opponents. Decisions of the umpires, if they are in the least doubtful, are received with jeers and howls, and sometimes even the players themselves express their contempt by grimaces and gesticulation, which would be unbecoming in infants deprived of their toys. It is true that it was many years ago, and possibly would not happen now, but the writer playing football against one of our three larger universities was, with the rest of his own team, hooted at, jeered, and almost interfered with during the game, by the members of the University whose present supremacy at the game in question makes such behaviour unnecessary.

One may say that such behaviour is never—certainly seldom—seen among amateurs in England. Fathers would be ashamed of their sons, schools and universities would lose not only caste, but revenue and reputation, if such things happened, and the head-masters and masters would root out such evils at any cost.

It remains to be said, in this particular connexion, that games as played in America are not more difficult, nor are the points to be decided nicer than in English games. A curious illustration of how we in America try to obviate all possible causes for dispute is seen in the fact that the batter is not out now if he is caught off the bat by the catcher, in the game of base-ball. It was difficult sometimes to decide whether it was the snap of the catcher's gloves, or some like sounding noise, or the actual contact of the swift ball and the bat; hence the change. But at cricket there is a similar and also a more subtle point still left to the judgment of the umpire; indeed, this latter is worthy of emphasis, because it stands quite alone as being the only question, not of fact but of hypothesis, left to the decision of an umpire in any game now played. The point in question is known to cricketers as leg-before-wicket. Here the umpire is called upon to decide whether a ball pitched at a certain spot *would have* hit the wicket if the batsman's leg had not been in front of the wicket at the time. In scores of games of cricket, at which the writer has been either spectator or participant, he has seen perhaps a dozen men given out leg-before-wicket, and of these dozen men of all classes of society, from the member of his university eleven down to the butcher's boy, not one of these has opened his lips to question the decision or to offer the slightest comment.

Granted that one is even prejudicedly American, one may well question whether so nice a point as this would pass unchallenged by both players and spectators in a match between two American colleges, upon which great hopes were placed, and possibly some dollars.

It is fair to add that our spectators are largely at fault in this matter. To the uninitiated the prime, not to say the sole, interest of a game is 'Who wins?' Our spectators are despondent or elated according as their favourites win or lose. All the accessories and fine features of a well-contested game are swamped for the majority by this one all-embracing interest. They appreciate little else because they understand little else. An English audience is not only an experienced, but a technically educated audience, and the spectators get their enjoyment from a multitude of nice details.

When the writer looks back upon the records of sport in America, he recalls as perhaps the most prominent figures for any length of time, and the particular favourites of the American base-ball public, two names—Mike Kelly, and he of the gigantic proportions and infantile title, 'Baby' Anson. Anson acquired fame as the brow-beater of umpires and the delight of newspaper reporters. Kelly invented the trick of running inside of third base when the umpire's back was turned, and of dropping his catcher's mask near the home plate, where it would interfere with, and probably injure, the man sliding in from third base. They were both good players, but both acknowledged to be unscrupulous players. Their trickiness, and ability to take instant advantage of mistakes, mishaps, errors, won for them their popularity. Even in our college games between amateurs certain of these professional and wholly unsportsmanlike tricks have been played, though, we are thankful to say, without increasing the popularity of the performers.

In this matter of the influence of spectators it is well to repeat what the writer has written in other reviews, that neither English nor Americans appreciate how much more democratic in certain matters is England than America. Englishmen who only know of America at the long range of theory cannot understand what seems like a contradiction ; and Americans, who are mostly birds of passage in England, do not see the truth of it. There can be not the slightest doubt, in the mind of the man who knows both countries, that the Englishman is a far more democratic sportsman than his American cousin. The butcher, the baker, the candlestick-maker play cricket day after day with the

squire and the lordling, and one match the writer recalls, where a footman and groom from the big house were called in to fill up an eleven to its proper number. The same holds true of the hunting field. But, strange to say, there is much less mingling and mixing of classes at their games in America. This democratic custom is an advantage in that thus a very large number of both spectators and players, of whatever class, have not only seen but have participated in games with players playing for the love of the game, and with a respect for, and a courteous obedience to, its best traditions. The groom and the footman would be as quick to see and to reprehend such a trick, let us say, as knocking a man's bails off when he accidentally steps out of his ground, as the young gentleman from Eton. The rule is that a man may be put out for stepping out of his ground, but unless he persists in stealing ground there is a higher though unformulated law which says this advantage shall not be taken. In America, at base-ball, on the contrary, the habit of running inside of second and third base—thus shortening materially the ground covered by the runner—became so frequent, that now two umpires are employed, when, if the players played fairly, only one is necessary.

The great mass of the general public in America who are interested in sport labour under the serious disadvantage of seeing our national game of base-ball played by paid professional players who are managed by stock companies, the sole desire of which is to make money out of the games. Nor are these players, as the Englishman might opine from the names of the clubs, as the Chicago Club, the New York Club, the Boston Club, and the like, men from those particular cities. On the contrary, each club buys its players, and is permitted so to do, without the smallest reference to what part of the country they hail from. They play purely and simply for their salaries, with no more sectional loyalty than a racehorse who runs to-day for one owner and to-morrow for another. Nothing could be more debilitating to the *morale* of sport than the state of things as above described. It is true that cricket in England includes many professionals, but no county is without its contingent of gentlemen players, and the standard of behaviour demanded of and acquiesced in by both players and spectators is very high. A row on a base-ball field is not uncommon, and a graduated scale of fines, to be inflicted upon players by the umpire, is a necessary weapon of defence from insult in his hands, while a disturbance at a cricket match is almost unheard of.[1]

[1] Unhappily this cannot be said of football.—Ed.

That the English amateur players who go to America to play cricket, or to compete in track athletics, are invariably treated with the utmost courtesy and the most generous hospitality, goes without saying. That athletes from Harvard or Yale are as manly, as courteous, and as fair in their play as their competitors from Oxford or Cambridge, no Englishman, much less an American, would deny. It is not to certify to these points that this paper is written. Our intention is to state, and, if possible, to give reasons for, the wide difference in the general point of view of Press, spectators, and to some extent the players themselves, in England and America.

And these differences seem to be due to several easily stated and uncontradictable facts. The much larger contingent of mature players in England puts amateur sport on a plane of sobriety, courtesy, and reticence which it does not occupy in America, for the traditions of sound play are more thought of and more emphasised by men than by boys. The feverish anxiety to win at all hazards is subordinated to higher considerations of courtesy and fairness when the players are of mature age and position, or accustomed to the standard of play of mature men, than when the players are boys accustomed to play mainly with boys, and before spectators who can apply only the test of who wins and who loses. The whole subject is aggravated when the national Press—or at least the worst section of it—degrades itself, and sport as well, by mean innuendoes, and blackguard accusations and suspicions. (One American newspaper intimated that the Cornell crew had been drugged before the race at Henley.)

Good games, well played, develop character. This is certainly emphasised in England, and is constantly kept in view by the whole race of English fathers, schoolmasters, and parsons, and the games themselves are regulated and kept within bounds by this test of their influence upon character. If boys will only do their best with the prospect of playing before a huge crowd in New York or at Springfield, where thousands of dollars are taken in gate-money, then the sooner our inter-collegiate contests are done away with the better. All our big games should be played on the grounds of one or the other university, with all the purely extraneous and artificial excitement induced by playing in a great city barred out. The games should be played for the games' sake, and before the real lovers of the game. As now arranged, many a man would like to see these games from real love of them who is debarred by the high price of tickets and the expense of spending a day or two in a great city, while a horde

of men and women, who know little or nothing of sportsmanlike sport, crowd to these games as a matter of fashion and excitement. We in America give too much weight to questions which logically have nothing to do with the essential features of a good game. The authorities at our colleges should not permit the question of gate-money to enter for a moment into a discussion of where, when, or how a game is played. Nor should the matter of convenience of spectators be considered unduly. All amateur sport is intended primarily for the moral and physical development of the players; all other considerations are distinctly and entirely minor matters. The English understand this, though they are as a race much slower and duller than we are.

In England it is claimed by every one in authority, from the Duke of Wellington's dictum about Eton's effect upon Waterloo, to the curate of the smallest parish, that sound, healthy sport maintains business; but to a far too great extent in America business attempts to maintain sport.

In practically every village and town in England gentlemen of mature age and influential position officer the various clubs, and to some extent play themselves. This state of things is rare in America, except in Massachusetts and the neighbourhood of New York, where the influence of the university graduates is beginning to be felt. There is still a subtle feeling akin to shame among Americans of mature years in regard to sport, as though it betokened a streak of frivolity, and would militate against a man's business or professional reputation for sobriety and steadiness, to play after school and college days. Nobody accuses English politicians of frivolous improprieties though they ride well across country. Mr. Balfour has a happy vein of humour, but his golf playing does not interfere with his responsible duties. President Eliot, of Harvard University, lost nothing of his influence by riding a Kentucky thoroughbred that very few of the undergraduates cared to mount when the President disposed of him to a neighbouring horse-dealer. President Low, of Columbia, used to play tennis with the writer, and may play still without loss of dignity. But, in spite of these instances, Englishmen who go to America either as spectators or performers, or who stay at home and read accounts of the same, should be made to realise that the great bulk of the public either takes no interest in sport at all, or disapproves tacitly of men of serious aims participating in sport. They flock to see paid professionals play base-ball, and, sad to say, gain most of their experience and knowledge of sportsmanship from these performances.

But all through the west, south-west, north-west, and south there is comparatively little interest, and even less participation, in games and pastimes by the influential portions of these communities. If, then, in our Press, and sometimes in the conduct of players and their assistants and managers from America, there are evidences of unsportsmanlike behaviour and feeling and speech, Englishmen must remember that while games and pastimes are an immense factor in the serious life of England, in America they are played at these terrible disadvantages: they receive little countenance and practically no active assistance from the mature and influential part of the community; the spectators have not been performers themselves, and get their ideas of sport mostly from seeing paid professional ball-players; the Press, with such notable exceptions as 'Harper's Weekly,' 'Outing,' the 'New York Tribune,' and 'New York Sun,' and others, is ignorant, and far too easily carried away by either victory or defeat, into blatant boasting or silly excuses. Amateur sport is mostly in the hands of boys, and boys who lack the best of all training—that of playing often with older men. Our business and professional men still have to learn that often *le temps le mieux employé est celui qu'on perd*, and that a day's cricket, or an hour's canter in the morning, or nine holes of golf, or a couple of sets of lawn-tennis, or even an hour's sharp walk, do not interfere with, but verily prosper, the serious concerns of life.

SOLDIER PLAYERS AT POLO

BY T. F. DALE

Polo is in its origin a military sport, almost a military exercise, and it is only within the last few years that it has become a popular pastime with civilians. As we look back over the history of the game, we note how the leading players of the older generation have all been men of the sword. It is now an oft-told tale how Mr. John Watson, as a subaltern of the 13th Hussars, first saw the possibilities of the game, and how later he introduced into England the improvements he had worked out in India. Since that time there has never been any first-class team in which one or more of the players has not been a soldier.

The secret of good polo lies in constant and unremitting practice, not, indeed, the aimless knocking about of the ball which passes under that name too often, but practice undertaken with the express purpose of improving or perfecting some particular stroke in which the player finds himself deficient. From his earliest days as a recruit officer, the willing but inexperienced man who joins a good polo regiment will find himself encouraged and guided by his seniors. Even if at first he has but little taste for the game, a little gentle pressure may induce him to provide himself with a couple of good ponies and to try his hand. There are but few men with a love for the saddle, and who have the ordinary athletic training of a public school, who will not discover in themselves a hitherto unsuspected aptitude for polo.

As soon as the young player begins to understand and to gain even but a little skill with stick and ball, he is almost sure to succumb to the fascinations of a game which probably gives more actual pleasure to the individual player, apart from the natural desire of victory for his own side, than any other game of skill and activity. To the man who is full of that *esprit de corps*

which is so strong in our army, polo offers a means of bringing distinction to his regiment.

The inter-regimental trophy contended for each year so eagerly at Hurlingham is at the present moment the chief athletic honour open to the officers of any regiment. Therefore to be in the regimental polo team is a coveted honour worth working hard for, and when the place in the selected four is obtained no exertion or self-denial is too great to increase the chance of final victory for the regiment. With such incentives to practice, and the advantage of such coaching as is fully and willingly given by the older players, it is not surprising that the level of soldiers' play at polo is a high one. Another advantage possessed by the young officer learning to play polo is that he can generally command the services of a good pony. Some years ago in India—and, no doubt, the rule prevails in England—there was an unwritten law that no good pony should be sold out of a regiment even though it was not the property of the regimental club. The latter institution, if a well-managed one, is a great help to a regimental game, enabling the captain of the team to mount the less well-endowed but promising officers by a co-operative system of purchase which greatly lessens the expense of procuring suitable mounts. It is well known, for instance, that the famous team of the Durham Light Infantry owed their success greatly to their regimental club. This was managed with noteworthy skill in the choice of ponies and great unselfishness on the part of some of its members. Moreover, the D.L.I. men knew very well how to pick out promising ponies in a rough state, and had some players who had the patience, perseverance, and skill to make the raw untrained animal into the finished polo pony. It is needless to point out that the assets of a club so managed were always increasing in value, and the inevitable losses and failures were thereby reduced to a minimum.

The leading principle of a regimental club is that many officers require ponies of a class they are unable to procure for themselves; that a good polo pony costs no more to keep than a bad one. Good ponies are bought by the club, and lent to those who are willing to keep them, thus freeing the club from all expenses when once the purchase is made. Indeed, the ponies appreciate in value, for Captain De Lisle says that a pony is worth his original dealer's price *plus* a year's keep if he be fit to play in second-class tournaments. It is these regimental polo clubs which make soldiers' polo possible. There is, of course, some self-denial needed on the part of those men in the regiment who do not play, but this is

willingly borne for the sake of the strong *esprit de corps* which animates all alike. Thus, the regimental team goes into a tournament as the representative of the whole of its officers.

The members of the team are not playing only for themselves, and in consequence there is resolution and a dash about the inter-regimental tournament at Hurlingham which no other series of matches can possibly possess, though something of the same kind may possibly grow up by degrees in the County Cup or the Hunt Cup. It is also worth noting in the interests of the game that the regimental polo club system, which is only co-operation after all, might be applied without much difficulty to county clubs. To return, however, to the main subject of this paper, the effect of the regimental training on our soldier polo players is very noticeable in their game, which is marked by closer combination, more determination, and a great power of playing a losing game.

These features are very noticeable in a player who is one of the very best of our own day, Colonel Le Gallais, of the 8th Hussars, a most representative instance of a soldier polo player. He was adjutant of his regiment, which speaks for his smartness as a soldier, and he has won distinction in Egypt for which his present rank is the due reward. Colonel Le Gallais has had a brilliant career as a soldier, and has not been without success between the flags, for he is a good horseman, who rides with head as well as hands. As a polo player he has had a long experience. No. 2 is his place, and his characteristic judgment and dash combined make him at his best one of the most efficient players in that important position in a team. The regiment to which he belongs —the 8th Hussars—though it has numbered many good players, has had very poor luck in the inter-regimental tournaments, often losing its best men on the eve of that series of matches ; therefore, when playing for his own regiment, Colonel Le Gallais has often had to play an uphill game, and it is on such occasions that he shines. Always in his place, never throwing away a chance, playing a game as steady and as careful as though he were a beginner only anxious to keep his place in the game, yet he can make a dash when an opening occurs, and he shares with a civilian player, Mr. Walter Buckmaster, the credit of being one of the best near-side hitters of the day. It was this steadiness and pluck that made Colonel Le Gallais so great a help to the Freebooters in the famous match when Captain Daly's team wrenched the Champion Cup from Sussex County. The Freebooters simply did not know when they were beaten. Colonel Le Gallais has been one of the polo men who have been most successful with

'A NEAR SIDE BACK-HANDER'

Arab ponies. His White Rose and Johnnie were in their day two of the very best polo ponies that ever galloped at Hurlingham.

Captain Kenneth Maclaren has over twenty years' service in the 13th Hussars, though he scarcely looks much older than he did when, soon after joining, he began to practise polo at Quetta under the eye of the great John Watson himself. The principles of the game the young subaltern learned under that master of the game, but his peculiarly neat and beautiful style of play is his own, and but two other people have it in anything like the same degree—Captain Renton (late 17th Lancers) and Mr. Buckmaster. There is no doubt that a good and finished style at any game adds greatly to the pleasure of lookers-on, and those who acquire it will always have their share of fame. As Colonel Le Gallais is great in attack, so Captain Maclaren is cool and resolute in defence. If the goal of his side is in danger, Captain Maclaren never seems or looks flurried, but exactly at the right moment his stick goes round, and the ball flies off to the best position for his own side to obtain possession of it. Captain Maclaren is a master of the arts of placing balls for his side and of back-handed strokes. As Colonel Le Gallais may be taken as the example of a soldier forward, so Captain Maclaren is the perfection of a soldier back, and both are pre-eminent in their careful and judicious training of their regimental teams.

It is undoubtedly from some points of view an advantage to be a light weight at polo. A sharp, thoroughbred, light-weight pony is invaluable at the beginning of the game; as it draws towards the end the case is altered, and if there be a close match the chances are rather in favour of the heavier team. Another soldier player who cannot be passed over has all the advantages and disadvantages of weight. Major Rimington, the 'back' of the well-known Inniskilling team, is, however, a singularly fine horseman, and is able to get the most out of any pony. On account of his height and weight he is a difficult man to mount properly, but once on a pony's back he will make the very most of him till the bell rings. Like Colonel Le Gallais and Captain Maclaren, Major Rimington is as keen a soldier as he is a polo player, and adds another to the long list of smart adjutants who have also been good polo players. Major Rimington often reminds the spectator who has seen much polo of Mr. John Watson in his early days, especially in the way the ball flies straight and true from his stick half across the ground. Major Rimington is a back player who has an excellent command of his team, and who, with Mr. Neil Haig as No. 3, is a master of the

art of feeding the forwards in an attack. One of the finest bits of polo play I have seen was some years ago, when the Inniskillings and the 13th Hussars were playing off a tie in the inter-regimental tournament at Hurlingham. Captain Maclaren and Major Rimington were the two backs, and there was for some time a regular duel between them as the ball flew backwards and forwards between the two No. 4's, never getting out of the reach of the stick of either player. I forget now which side got away with the ball, nor does it matter.

Comparisons are odious, but if soldier polo players were asked for the name of the best No. 3 now playing, there would be almost a unanimous vote for Major Hoare, of the 4th Hussars. He is not, perhaps, quite the equal of Captain Colvin (9th Lancers), who was the best soldier No. 3 I have ever seen, and whose place, taken as an all-round player in that position, has never quite been filled since he retired from the game. But Major Hoare, if his judgment be not quite equal to that of the Lancer No. 3, is one of those players who add greatly to the interest of the games in which they play. They seem to lend to the other players their own force and enthusiasm, and they have scarcely struck the ball before the pace improves, until at length every pony is going at full stretch and the players are straining every nerve to keep their places in their team.

Another cheery and effective No. 3 is Mr. Neil Haig. A mighty hitter, with a straight eye, he always plays for his side, and is a most firm believer in the duty of back players to 'feed the forwards,' to use his own favourite words. Weight tells against him; but, on the other hand, he has the by no means universal gift of making his ponies gallop, and the pace he gets out of them astonishes those who see him at polo for the first time.

Almost unconsciously we have thus been building up a polo team of soldiers, and only No. 1 remains to complete it. How rare a really first-class No. 1 is all managers of polo clubs know. The combination required of unselfishness, rapidity of decision, superior horsemanship, and quick yet handy ponies—for No. 1's pony simply *must* not pull—is rare. For perfect unselfishness and playing for his side of soldiers on the active list Captain Pedder, 13th Hussars, seems to me to stand first. The very excellence of his play often causes his thoroughly sound and sometimes brilliant polo to be overlooked and others to be praised when he deserves it. Another good No. 1 is Captain (since Omdurman Major) W. Persse, a fine horseman, who can play polo, or ride a

steeplechase, or lead a charge, and who has done all three with success. Few No. 1 players know so well when to hit the ball and when to leave it, and in front of a brilliant but somewhat uncertain No. 2 Major Persse is at his best. He is not much known in England, as since the return of his regiment (Queen's Bays) to England he has been serving in Egypt, and seeking and finding a reputation on a wider field than the Hurlingham or Ranelagh match grounds.

Mr. Marjoribanks, of the Royal Horse Guards, is another good soldier No. 1 : good and bold in riding off the back, and a very hard, straight hitter. His play is something in the style of Lord Southampton, which was so much admired when the present master of the Woodland Pytchley played No. 2 in the Freebooters' team of the 10th Hussars.

Having thus put together, as it were, an ideal soldier team, it occurs to me how much it would add to the interest of the Champion Cup if we could have two entries, one of past and the other of present soldiers, composed of carefully picked representative army teams.

No mere regimental team, however good, can hope to beat Rugby or the Freebooters, for these clubs have such large fields of choice, and can practically put on the ground the eight best players of the day; but with a soldier team chosen as I have suggested, the chances would be well equalised. The actual selection of the chosen teams might be in the hands of some well-known soldier players of repute. If this is possible it would be a most interesting contest, for even when beaten, soldiers have a way of playing out a game to the bitter end, which prevents the weariness which is apt to overtake lookers-on when one side or the other in a polo match has collapsed.

The men noted above do not indeed exhaust the long catalogue of good soldier players; but space and the patience of readers would fail me to speak of many notable names—of Captain De Lisle, 'the organiser of Victory' for the Durham Light Infantry, of Messrs. Luard and Wilkinson of the same regiment, of Captain Brand of the 10th Hussars, Major Malcolm Little, Mr. Winston Churchill—but politics and literature are now alluring him from the army—Lord William Bentinck, Captain Willoughby, Major Duff, Captain Egerton-Green (who now manages the Hurlingham club, and who will leave the service), Mr. Wood (18th Hussars), and many others.

At the time I am writing, with the regimental tournament just over, it is natural to dwell on the soldiers of to-day. Nor

can I pass from the subject without noting the fine play of the winning team of the 7th Hussars, and of the tactics of their No. 4, Major Poore, who has since shown himself as fine a cricketer as he is a polo player. Perhaps in the whole history of polo there has never been a finer struggle than that between the 13th Hussars and the 7th for the Inter-regimental Cup of 1899. With such examples before us it would be both unwise and ungrateful to forget those soldier players of the past who founded the fine school of polo which in England has made the game what it is. The combination which has raised polo from an exciting *mêlée* to a game of skill of a high class had its origin in military *esprit de corps*, and came to us from the leading soldier players of the past—Mr. John Watson, Colonel T. St. Quentin, Colonel R. B. Fisher, Lords Airlie and Valentia, and many others. The four last named belonged to the 10th Hussars, a distinguished regiment which has always been in the first rank of polo players, and these were all exponents of the sound and dashing style of play which is learned by its officers as a matter of course.

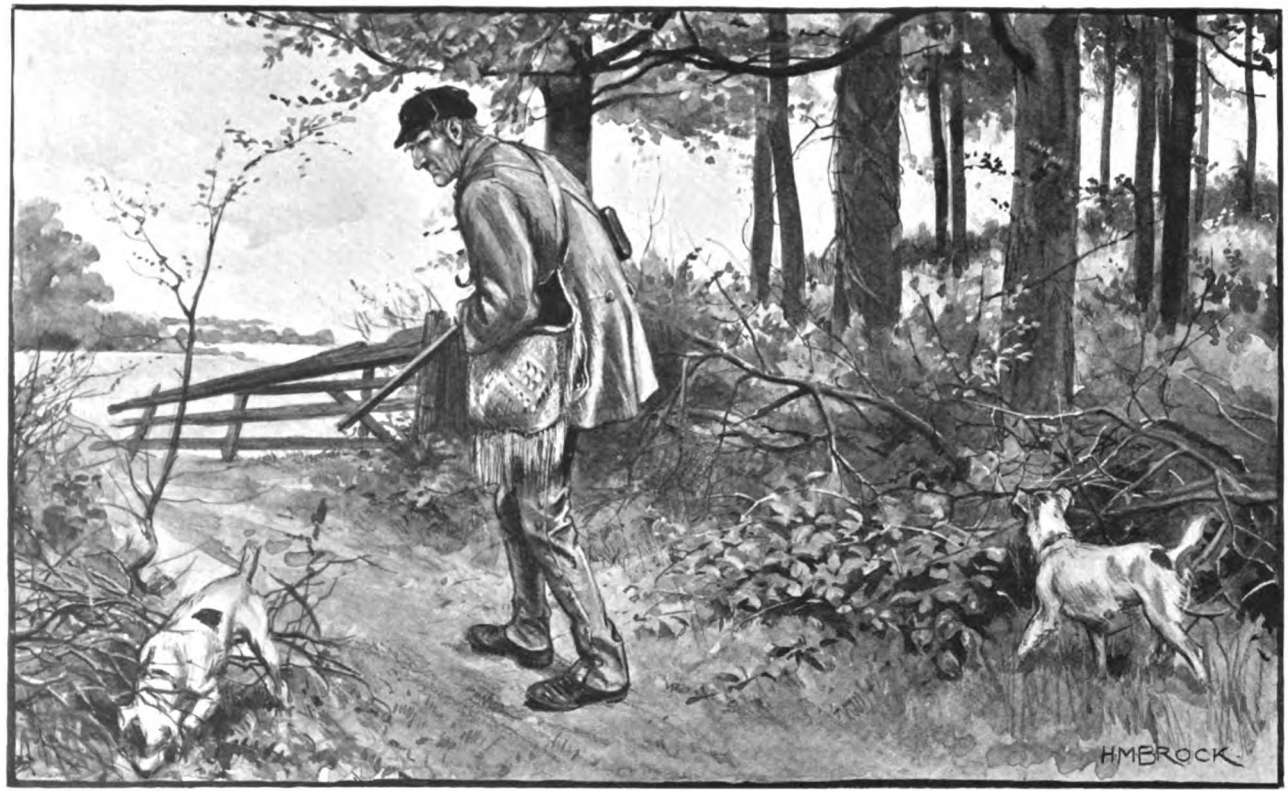
Polo is a delightful pastime for any man; but for the soldier it is like hunting—a useful exercise, and an admirable training for the great work of his life.

GAMEKEEPERS AND GILLIES

BY ALEX. INNES SHAND

'WALKS with my tutor' may be all very well, when the tutor is less of a walking encyclopædia than Mr. Barlow, but walks with the keeper are those that linger lovingly in the memory. There was no shirking the lessons and the hours were never too long. In the course of life we have come across keepers of various kinds, and have even made passing acquaintance to our cost with the superb autocrat who smiles on banknotes and sneers at sovereigns. He is dignified as an archbishop or a local stationmaster, and only to be approached with admiration tempered by awe. But the gradations of rank are as many in keeperhood as in the literary calling, where you may have a second Shakespeare at the top of the tree and the penny-a-lining reporter at the bottom. The first friend of our early youth made no pretensions and gave himself no airs. His sole wish seemed to be to slip through the world unobserved. Old Craigie may have been sixty, though he looked more. He moved over crackling beech leaves as across soft carpets of fir needles with the silent tread of the Indian, and he had contracted a slouching gait from habitually stooping beneath the spruce boughs. Like the Indian's, his face was a swarthy bronze and his keen grey eyes were roving everywhere, reading 'sign' in soft ground or snow, like print. His dress, too, was primitive and sylvan. So far as one could see he never renewed

his wardrobe, though he kept a strong-smelling gala suit for high days and holidays, which was carefully stowed away in a chest and might have been handed down as an heirloom. His every-day wear of homespun and corduroy had been splashed and saturated with blood, and the soil of his daily tramps had caked upon the long gaiters. His constant companions were a pair of rough terriers—never more or less—who followed at his heels like shadows and answered to each wave of his hand. They shared his bed and brose, and, as Dandie Dinmont would have said, with their jaws, running back to the ears, and their shark-like teeth, they were fell chiels at the vermin. They had constant opportunities for showing their stuff. The estate which Craigie had in charge—there were other outlying lands supposed to be under his guardianship—had been little cared for through a long minority. The woods were unthinned, and where the ground was damp, undergrown with almost impenetrable thicket; the ill-drained meadows were studded with thick tufts of rushes, where hares lay out, 'maist as big as lambs,' and what with honey-combed gravel banks and the loose stone dykes with their labyrinths of subterranean passages, the tenants declared they were just devoured with the rabbits. Craigie shone chiefly as a trapper and vermin-killer, which with his loitering ways made him the most fascinating of companions for a boy. Shooting of some kind or another was going on all the year round. When he was not weighted by half a dozen traps, his gun was always across his arm. A hawk would fly off the nest to fall to a snap-shot as it glided through the branches, and be found fluttering and fighting with talons and beak as it lay broken-winged on its back. Then the tree must be climbed to make prize of the eggs or young. You could not whistle a prolonged solo before any of the crumbling dykes without seeing one weasel or more pop out his head to listen to the music. That, indeed, was the surest way of getting them, for even if they escaped a first attempt, they would come back to give the charmer a second chance. Polecats, now almost extinct there, were then not infrequently to be found in the rabbit traps; but the domestic cat, run wild from the cottages and breeding in the woods, was the pet aversion of old Craigie and his terriers. Now that we have made friends of many favourites that curl up confidingly on our knees, we look back with shame and remorse to the brutal inhumanity of thoughtless boyhood. It was old Craigie's fault. He hated the cat as the sailor abhors the shark, and would sooner see one worried than shoot it out of hand. A sharp peculiar bark from



OLD CRAIGIE

old Rory would tell that a cat was treed, and in that case it might be dismissed with happy despatch. But sometimes it would be brought to bay after a violent rampage through the under-cover, and then he would wax eloquent over the perfect concert of the terriers. Like Dinmont, he had only two names for his dogs. Rory would fly at one point and Mark at another, and both showed an instinct for anatomy which might have been envied by the parish doctor. Another inhuman proceeding, though we never deemed it so, was killing down the rabbits in the breeding season. Indeed it was almost a work of necessity when their multiplication had brought tenants to the brink of revolt. It certainly was highly exciting and excellent practice for the young gunner. You walked round the skirts of plantations which swelled breast-high above immemorial embankments of stone and turf, over the encircling fields of shooting oats. Rory and Mark had scarcely broken out with their yap-yap before the oat stems were seen bending in all directions, as if swayed by mysterious currents. Then the rabbits, scuttling for their burrows, would come scrambling up the banks by scores.

They were freely given away to stop the mouths of the grumblers, and that was a form of perquisite by which the old keeper profited. Silent as he often was, and though his solitary rambles had given the habit of indulging in muttering and monologue, he had social tastes and could make himself agreeable in company. He was continually dropping in at the farm-steadings and was as welcome everywhere as Edie Ochiltree. Those visits were most frequent in the winter or when the weather was wet. Out came bottle and glass, as a matter of course, in a parlour where the window sash was seldom raised, and which was agreeably impregnated with the fragrance of Glenlivet. Taking his liquor leisurely, he could stand any fair amount of soaking, and the spirit affected him as little as the piercing east winds or the sleet. He had his own code of morality and stuck to his principles. He would make ostentatious profession of his sobriety when slightly shaky on the legs, but invariably added the saving clause, that he thought none the worse of a man who would get drunk when his work was done. And Craigie always religiously got drunk when there was a 'barns' breaking,' a harvest ball, or any other special occasion. The only way to keep him straight was to tell him off to serve out the spirits, and then he waited till the last guest was gone. Once indiscretion nearly brought him to signal grief. Being a widower he was billeted in quarters at the home farm. He

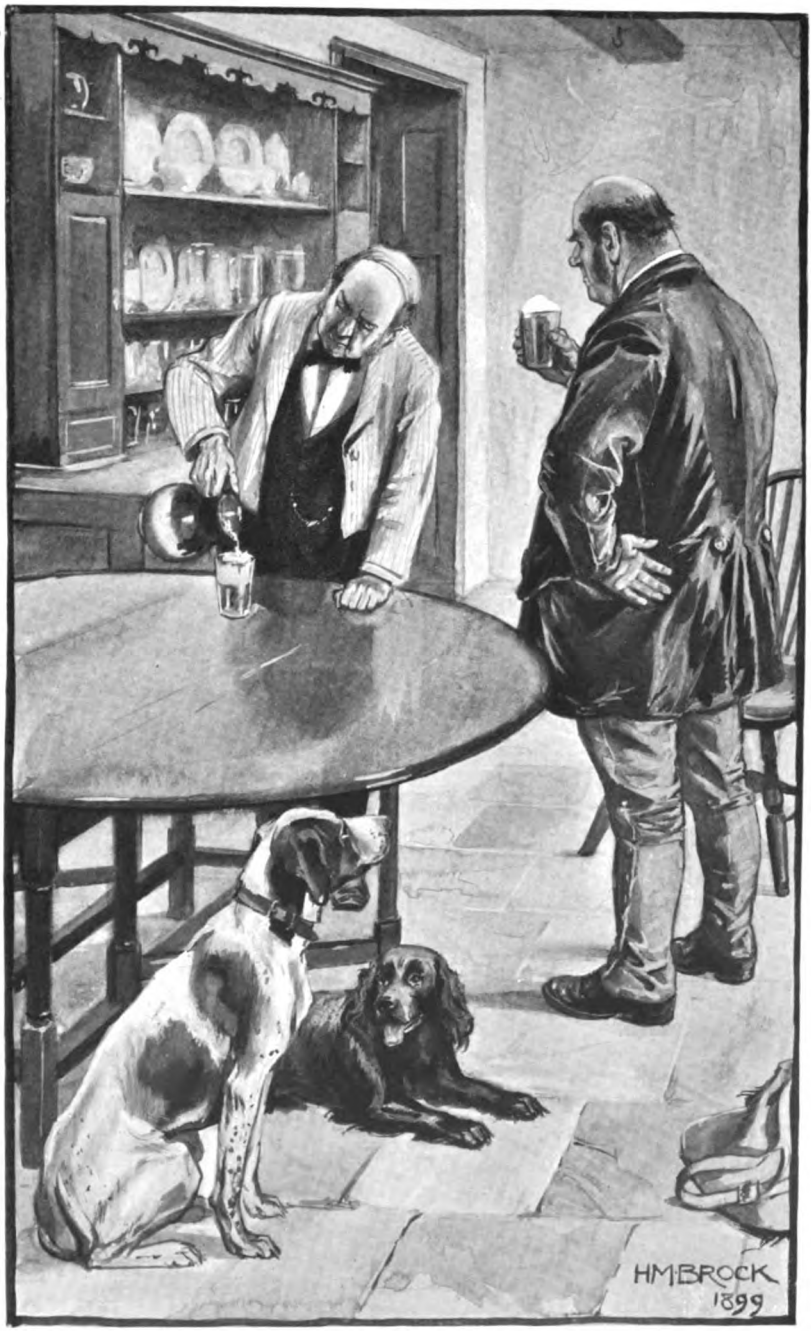
insisted on doing or neglecting his own room-cleaning, and was as resentful of feminine interference as the Antiquary or any other bookworm. One morning a strong smell of burning was traced to his garret, and he was found slumbering peacefully among his smouldering blankets. Fortunately he had been making a night of it, and had gone to bed with the waking larks and ploughmen. There was a whole magazine of canisters of Curtis and Harvey beneath his couch, and for once he was abashed and almost apologetic. Nor did the matter end with his banishment to the cottage at the kennels. There was a standing feud between Craigie and the minister, for though professing himself a devout Presbyterian, cart ropes would never have dragged him to the kirk. He said it was his duty to see to the game when the poacher lads would be setting their snares. As matter of fact, parochial opinion would not have tolerated poaching on the Sabbath. But the minister had heard whispers of long-winded discourses, and now he seized his chance. Old Craigie heard with disgust how his miraculous escape had been held up to the congregation as an example and a warning, and after emphatic denunciation of his latitudinarian habits, he had been solemnly counselled to mend his ways. The first fruits of repentance were an outbreak of profanity, in which, to do him justice, he seldom indulged. But parochial opinion was strong, and Craigie found himself cold-shouldered. He was in the position of the Irish Celt who has been denounced by the priest from the altar. The whisky tap was turned off at his favourite resorts, and so he decided to do penance metaphorically and seek absolution. We doubt if the reformation was either thorough or lasting, but we well remember we regretted it. For he renounced for the time the Sunday afternoon rambles which were the most delightful of all; when the gun was laid aside and the traps left at home, and when he condescended to bird-nesting, hunting for plover eggs or similar frivolities; when, leaving the rookeries behind, with their twig-strewn lawns of the yellow daffodil, we followed the trouty burn down through labyrinths of tangled copse, fished by the solitary heron and sheltering ousel and water-hen; or upwards past the sedgy mill-dam frequented by duck and teal to its sources in the black peat bog, the breeding-place of snipe and lapwing. Then as successive seasons went by his joints were visibly stiffening. He could no longer leap the ditches or fly the tottering dykes. Sooner or later the rheumatism which has always been stalking behind must come up with the rustic who has been working in all weathers. Craigie was to be retired on a pension, and he

accepted it after considerable grumbling. For he had to confess, and it showed his constitutional reticence, that he was to have a home with a son who had made money in Australia, and who had the grace not to be ashamed of a father who had never corresponded with him, and *pour cause*. That he had every comfort in his decline is certain; how far he was happy is another question. When superannuated judges or bishops stick to their benches it is not always from love of lucre or power, but from the horror of breaking with the habits of a lifetime and holding on in vacuity with their occupations gone.

A contrast in every way was an old Dorsetshire acquaintance. Craigie was lank and wiry, with salient Scotch features. Burden was the type of the portly English yeoman, broad in the shoulders and broader in the beam—the horn buttons of his coat behind were shining oases in a vast expanse of brown velveteen. Seen from the front, his figure was Falstaffian. The hereditary representative of a race of keepers, he had taken life easily from the cradle. His cottage, sheltered under a cluster of elms, was such a combination of English picturesqueness and comfort as Birket Foster delighted to paint. The incessant yelping in the adjacent kennels, which might have disturbed the tranquillity of another man, was music in his accustomed ears, and sent him peacefully to sleep. Not that he needed lulling, for his constitution was somniferous. He has been seen to drop off on his sturdy legs, after a heavy luncheon, as he was watching the dogs working in the turnips; and when he sat regularly of a Sunday under his master, who was a squire-parson, he would have scandalised the congregation when he broke out in a stertorous snore, had he not been privileged. Within the cottage was every sign of good housekeeping – brown home-baked loaves on the shelves, flitches of bacon hanging in the broad chimney, a barrel of strong home-brewed from the Hall always on strike. The living room was decorated in sylvan fashion, and in excellent taste. The chairs and settles were made soft with dressed skins, which likewise did duty for carpets and hearth-rug. These could be taken up and shaken when he stumped in with his muddy boots. Guns, traps, and game-bags decorated the walls, and on the shelves were such zoological curiosities as silvered pheasants, pied badgers, and phenomenal fishes. On the gable, and above the ferret hutches, was a moulding Montfaucon of gibbeted vermin. Burden had been not averse from a rough-and-tumble fight in his youth, but latterly he had devolved the duties of night watching on his deputies. Besides his corpulence and

shortened wind, which made it a stiff business at the best of times to breast the downs, he went with a halting limp which was the souvenir of an affair with poachers. They had pitched him down a chalk pit, where he was left for dead, and dead he nearly was when picked up twelve hours afterwards.

Punctually each morning he went through the ceremony of going to the gun-room to ask for the orders he seldom got and never desired. Punctually he adjourned to the servants' hall, where he shared a tankard with the old butler. When the gentlemen went shooting, the two between them always attended carefully to the provant. Burden had two promising lads, who, of course, were being brought up to the ancestral calling. Both the hobbledehoys were keen markers and quick shots. But while Samuel was told off to superintend the marking and signal —very necessary in that country of meadow and moorland chequered with copses and crossed by ridges—Garge's business was to follow hard on the guns, with a great jar of home-brewed slung to his shoulders. Ascetic athletes tell us that a little cold tea is the best thing in the world to walk on. It may be so, but a drain from Garge's beer-jar was like the nectar of Olympus in a blazing sun. Not that we object to tea in time and place. On the contrary, there was nothing pleasanter than dropping into Burden's cottage after a chilly day in the coverts in November, and nothing was more gratifying to the hospitable keeper. His good woman bustled about and brought in the tea, with the richest of cream, and bright golden butter, and cakes that came smoking-hot from the griddle. We thought nothing then of digestion, and left the dinner to take care of itself. As for the host, he stuck to his ale, but over his liquor he would become garrulous. He had many a wild tale, and some of them handed down from his fathers, of smugglers and wreckers; of signal-lights flashing out on the darkness from lonely farmhouses or the hovels of half-savage squatters; of trains of horses with clanking hoofs and chains winding from the combs up the chalk tracks when the night should have been silent; and of noble vessels like the 'Halsewell' East Indiaman shivered against the sheer cliffs of St. Alban's Head, when all the country-side turned out to save life or help themselves to salvage. Burden carefully looked after the pheasants and bushed the meadows against netting the partridges, but his game of predilection was the landrail, which was common on the downs before the migration and a standing source of trouble with his favourite setters. After the first flushing, the flight of the sneaking run, the young



SHARED A TANKARD WITH THE OLD BUTLER

dogs would rush in—and small blame to them. Peace to his memory: he sleeps under the yews, outside the little church in which he used to slumber.

We have another southern cottage in mind; in situation and aspect it is not unlike that of Burden, but the occupant is a very different manner of man. We name neither him nor his county; not that his record is other than unimpeachable. But he is what you might call the man of the modern school, a diplomatist as well as a disciplinarian and strategist. He has good wages and he earns them well. He knows that he knows his business—if anything, he is a trifle too self-satisfied, and has taken the measure of his master's foot to an inch. In point of fact, he is the Richelieu of a Louis Treize; he has made himself indispensable, and with a flattering obsequiousness on occasion, it is he who governs everything. He fixes the shooting days, he arranges the beats, he posts the guns autocratically, he almost invites the guests, and does pretty nearly everything except paying the bills. As he distributes the presents of game, engages the beaters and brings forward promising boys as stops, he is a power in the parish, superior to the parson and scarcely inferior to the squire. He is good-tempered though dictatorial, and if he is profane under provocation, and sometimes lays his stick across the shoulders of a skulker, on the whole his regiment of volunteers is attached to him. For his own sake he is ready to encourage merit, and though we should be sorry to swear that he is altogether uninfluenced by tips, generally the guns are discreetly distributed. For he takes a pride in his business, and has the credit of the shooting at heart, so that if the master does not mind playing second fiddle he is tolerably safe in relying on him. He is fairly educated, and has selected a little library of the standard authorities on the new pheasant rearing. He gets the 'Field' from the squire and sometimes writes to it. He has decided ideas, but steers clear of crotchets. A good-looking fellow, well set up, and with a flow of small talk, he pays assiduous court to the farmers wives for the sake of the brood hens. Yet the husbands are never jealous, for the flirtations are both harmless and profitable. Before the shooting of one season is well over, he is laying far-sighted schemes for the next, and as his master does not object to going in leading strings, he could hardly employ a more capable man. Moreover, he does good service in entertaining guests when time hangs on their hands out of the shooting season. We would ask no more instructive companion in the woodland rambles, when he is gathering the early pheasant eggs to be hatched at home.

For he knows the habits and the note of each migrant that is tuning up, down to the willow wren and the skulking sedge-warbler.

Our Kentish friend is an agreeable man, as Peggotty remarked of her brother to David Copperfield, but for unembarrassed, gentlemanlike society, give us the genuine Highland keeper. He never takes a liberty, as he never invites one. He has the mountain dignity without a touch of false pride, for he knows his place and takes his stand upon it. Donald Ross is an acquaintance of long standing, and as we have nothing but good to say of him, we do not mind if he is identified. He has accompanied us on many a little tour, when bent upon fishing or inspecting shootings. He not only looked after rods and guns, but was the most intelligent and trustworthy of couriers. He carried the purse, he paid the bills, he bargained with the boatmen and tipped the drivers of 'machines.' The greasing of the soaked boots was all within his province, but he would insist on volunteering for the valeting, and a capital valet he was. He never did any waiting at the Highland inns, for the simple reason that he always sat down with us. So there was none of the dulness of a solitary repast or a lonely evening—modest he was, but perfectly unembarrassed, and of course we had any number of subjects in common. After chatting over the incidents of the day, he would be drawn on to the inexhaustible theme of his experiences on the moors and in the forests. Besides, if he had never travelled further to the south than Inverness, he had been a great reader in the long winter nights. There was a library of travels in his mountain lodge, and he was at home with Nansen as with Stanley. He had gone tiger-hunting and elephant-shooting in tropical jungles; he had been harpooning whales among the icebergs, had angled for tarpons off the coasts of Florida. The more he knew the more he wanted to know, and we never came across a more quietly inquisitive mind. Consequently he was replete with observation and information. On the whole his position was an enviable one, and nothing would have induced him to change it. Born and bred in the wilds, he would rather be a keeper than a king. For nine months in the twelve he lived in the kitchen of the lodge, and was absolute lord of the surrounding solitudes. Nor was there any great difference when his master came north for the shooting or the stalking, except that Donald shifted his quarters to a snug shealing hard by. Accomplished in all forest-craft, he commanded respect and obedience. He was the beau-ideal of the mountaineer, as the mountaineer is

when well fed and well clothed from childhood. He stood over six feet, broad-chested, narrow-flanked, with legs that seemed set in springs of steel, and keen grey eyes that could almost dispense with 'the prospect glass' when scouring the corries in search of the deer. He never seemed to exceed a moderate pace, yet those legs of his got marvellously over the ground. He could find grip for his fingers and foothold in apparently impossible rock-climbing, and he could sprint astonishingly, with wind to spare, when his hounds were baying a wounded hart and in peril from the sweep of the horns. Not that he held with 'loosing dogs to stir the ground,' and he would only slip them in extremity.

But accidents will befall the most experienced hillmen, and he could tell of sundry hair-breadth escapes. There was one memorable day when he was minded to go after an old billy-goat —a stinking beast, as he contemptuously described it—but the master had set his heart on making a trophy of the gnarled horns and patriarchal beard. 'The beast was aye keeping to the rocks upon Funichan, and there was not a hart between the lodge and Strathnaver that was his equal for wisdom or cunning.' To shorten the story, Donald dropped down on him from above and sent the ball clean through his shoulders. The goat pitched over the precipice, to be smashed to smithereens on a ledge, and with many searchings of heart Donald scrambled down with the notion of picking up the pieces. He landed on the same ledge with a sudden slip, and when he sought to gather himself up he found himself helpless. 'My ankle was badly strained; it was swelling to an extraordinary size; when I had cut away the boot, the pain was terrible. I was like to swoon and tumble farther, till I took a drink of the flask.' There he lay for a long afternoon, through the night and late into the next day. Tortured by thirst, which made him indifferent to hunger, the hours dragged to intolerable length, and, as he said, he had made up his mind to the worst, for he saw small hope of succour. He kent they would be seeking him, but they knew not where he was. He had left his rifle when he stripped his coat to descend, so he could fire no shot by way of signal. And the ledge was out of sight from above as well as from below. What saved him, when he had tasted the bitterness of death, was the impatience of the birds of prey and the feathered sextons. The notice of the searching gillies was attracted by the clamorous croaking of ravens and hooded crows, and then they had to send to the lodge for ropes before the rescue was effected.

'Aye, it was a gey near thing,' mused Donald, 'and yet I

believe I've been harder put to it in the mists and the snowdrifts. In the daylight, sir, I would be ready to swear that I would find my way anywhere blindfold. Ye ken yourself how queerlike you begin to feel when the mist comes rolling from the montins, and ever thicker and thicker. Follow the burn, if you can stumble on one, and you will be all right. But the burn goes daundering about, and seldom points straight to home, and so, of course, when it is drawing on for supper-time you will be trying to take a short cut. And if you should be benighted in the middle of a bog, God help you! You had best set yourself down and see the night through, than chance being buried in a moss-pit. Aye, the mists are bad, and yet, maybe, the sudden rain speuts are worse, when every bit burn is running like a mill-race, and each watercourse in the corries is in raging flood. It may be that for good or ill you are bound to get over, and even if there be two of you holding to each other by the collars, you set your foot on a rolling stone and then——'

Then Donald would come to a stop and say he was croaking like an old wife, and so the subject might be changed to poachers. In the forests of the North there are poachers and poachers, and for the higher orders of the fraternity Donald has a chivalrous regard. In fact, he and they are kindred spirits; if he had not been bred a keeper, he would have been a free shot himself. For deep in the hereditary highlandism is the conviction that the wild animals of the wastes should be common property. A *laudator temporis acti*, he is inclined to lament that the good old-fashioned raiding is a thing of the past. He remembers many a sharp affair between foresters and free shots, and many a shrewd trick that one played the other. Then when the yeld hinds were in season, regular forays were organised. Sometimes, as he said, there was nothing for it but to look on, for it was ill interfering when there were but two or three of us, with a dozen or more of long-legged lads that came from no one knew where, and would never have let themselves be taken. In wet or dry, in frost or snowfall, they would lie out of a night in some bieldy bit beneath their plaids, or as often they would seek quarters in some shepherd's shealing. For fear or favour, the most of the shepherds were banded with them, and if they carried away the neck and the haunches, many a fair fore-quarter they would leave behind. But there is little of the kind going forward nowadays; with the southern gentlemen that pay extraordinary rents, there are many more gillies and watchers than there used to be, and then there is the new police. What with spying upon any orra characters

and passing on the word, they make the country too warm for the more decent lads who would go shooting for the sport as much as for the profit.

Nevertheless, he would hasten to explain that, besides directing the stalk and killing down the vermin on the grouse moors, there is still anxious enough occupation for the forester. Though venison has been falling in the markets, there is still money to be made in the poaching business. But now the poacher generally sneaks out single-handed. For the most part he is a resident in the neighbourhood, as familiar with the habits of the watchers as with those of the deer. He is prompt to seize on each opportunity—a merry-making, a wedding, or a funeral. He is apt to lie in ambush in the passes, when the deer in the dim grey of the dawn are passing from one watershed to another, for when the weather and the wilds are undisturbed, they are strangely methodical in their movements. Then, taking a pot shot at close quarters, he can reduce the charge of powder. Yet even should the shot be heard, it is by no means sure to betray him. Echoed from cliff to cliff, through corrie to corrie, the sound may puzzle the most practised ear; yet in any case, if excitement be the soul of sport, the present-day hill-sneak should have it in perfection. All the time he is on the track of the wary deer he is in mortal terror of being stalked himself, and he knows that the quarry he is after, and the fowls of the air, are all in a conspiracy to testify against him. The startled shifting of an unregarded lot of hinds may reveal his presence to some gillie going the rounds, and as he scents danger and lies crouching in the bottom of a moss-hag, the lapwings and the whaups will come stooping and clamouring. Invaluable sentinels they are and thoroughly reliable for scout duty.

The gillies, by the way, though they may have little forest-lore, and are generally regarded as serviceable drudges, are often well worth cultivating. They show the adaptability of the Celt, who can turn his hand to anything, from ranching in Manitoba to running a whisky shop in the Glasgow Gallowgate, or navigating a half-decked boat in the roosts of the Pentland, when the surges are lashed into mad turmoil with the meeting of the storm and the tides. There were islesmen from Skye or the Long Island who were really amphibious, as much at home in either element as any water spaniel. Coming in after a soaking to the skin, a shake of the shaggy homespun would suffice for a change, and they would sit down contentedly over the glowing peats in the steam of their clothes and a cloud of tobacco smoke. With

whisky in more or less moderation they were as happy as kings. Spring after spring they would go out to the fishing, bringing home their wages or shares, only to hand them over to their wives. Forthwith they would make a fresh start, tramping it eastwards in quest of a sporting engagement. The same men would come back yearly to the same ground; they were expected, and could make pretty sure of a welcome, and veterans of approved character would give vouchers for friends. They were often silent men, somewhat sullen of mood, though only superficially so, and like the Breton brought up between grey heaths and green seas, rather mystically minded and addicted to superstition. Nevertheless they had their amiable weaknesses; a few inches of strong twist would bring smiles to their faces and whisky would unlock their lips. You would find that those weather-beaten, self-contained men had their veins of romance and Ossianic poetry. The great thing was to get one of them apart, to make him forget himself and his fear of being ridiculous, for he was sensitive on the score of his English. Then, fairly launched on the flood of recollections, looking dreamily across the toddy tumbler through the haze of the tobacco smoke, he would describe the situations with dramatic power and graphic eloquence of gesture, when, cutting loose their nets to drive before the gale, they had made choice between beggary and certain death, and of the pathos of the home-coming with empty pockets But whether Catholics, Established folk, or belonging to the Free Kirk, the most of these islesmen are fatalists or predestinarians; if never hilarious they are seldom sad, and always ready to try fresh falls with Fortune.

CANOEING FOR PLEASURE AND SPORT IN CANADA

BY J. MACDONALD OXLEY

OUR red-skinned brethren of the forest and the prairie deserve a hearty meed of gratitude at our hands for having provided us with four instruments of sport and pleasure that are altogether unexcelled in their own way—to wit, the snow-shoe, the toboggan, the lacrosse and the canoe; two of them being admirably adapted for the snowy season, and two for the sunny days of summer. While with him all but one, the lacrosse, were working tools rather than playthings, with us they for the most part represent recreation.

This is particularly the case with the canoe, which at all inland summer resorts has of late years become so popular as to threaten to supplant the safer but less picturesque rowing skiff, while at the annual regattas of such places it certainly furnishes the most interesting events on the programme. But it is not the birch-bark of immemorial antiquity that is in evidence nowadays. To use a popular slang phrase, the pale-face has seen the red-man's work and gone one better. He has discarded the fragile and troublesome bark in favour of the more enduring bass-wood or cedar, and in so doing has evolved a more graceful and far swifter craft than the most expert of aboriginal builders ever put together.

The birch-bark canoe, so far as its use by us is concerned, survives principally for the purposes of hunting and fishing

expeditions, where wild country has to be traversed, and the laborious portage is a frequent incident of the journey. Here it holds its pristine supremacy unquestioned, and runs no risk of being supplanted by its wooden rival, which is altogether too heavy to be carried long distances over land. The ease with which an Indian will balance a sixty-pound birch-bark on his shoulders, and make his way over the roughest ground, or through tangled underbrush, is astonishing to the average pale-face, who, with such a burden, would be hopelessly handicapped.

Considering the fragile structure of these bark canoes, it is wonderful what their tawny owners will do with them. Despite

PORTAGING THE CANOE

their utter absence of keel, they will sail them through white caps, when the slightest inattention would mean instant upset. They will paddle them down through foaming surging rapids that make the hearts of the white passengers stand still, and they will pole them up against turbulent torrents, where, if the poles were to break, the frail craft would inevitably be swept away to destruction. So daring are they, so confident of their strength and skill, that, in portaging around a fall, they will always re-launch the canoe within so short a distance from the head of the fall, that it requires a fierce fight to prevent its being carried over, and the snapping of a paddle would mean certain death to

all on board. A friend of mine, recently returned from a trip through the wilds of Labrador, had a thrilling experience of this kind when, for a period of harrowing suspense, the issue between the muscles of the Indians and the might of the torrent hung in doubt, and it was only after superhuman exertions that the other side of the rapid was gained, not more than ten feet from the head of a roaring cataract. After that he insisted upon the portage being prolonged until less dangerous water was reached.

The wooden canoe is of comparatively recent date, and of Canadian origin, that made at Rice Lake, Ontario, being the first to win public attention. Now there are many makers of them on both sides of the boundary line. By dint of experience and stress of competition the construction of this type would seem to have been brought very close to perfection, and it is not

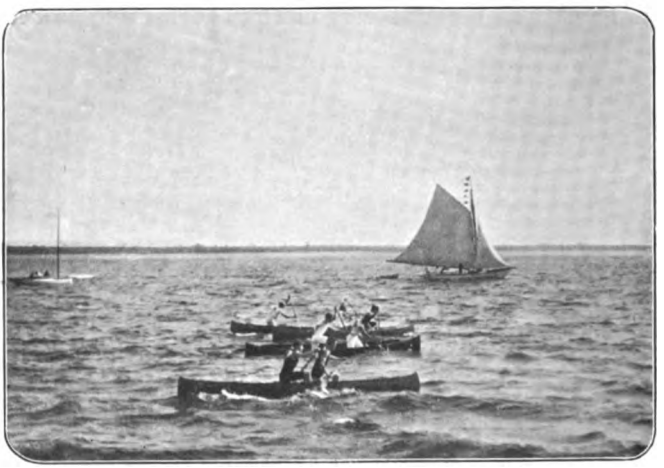
SINGLE PADDLE

easy to conceive of much improvement in beauty of line, or practical efficiency. Not content with finding this graceful craft the most attractive of all for gentle voyaging on summer waters, the ever-restless spirit of man must needs adapt it to the excitement of racing, and canoe contests now constitute the chief feature of the regattas annually held at summer resorts on the inland waters.

Both sails and paddles are used in these races, and I will try to give some idea of the different events that usually figure upon the programme. First comes the single-paddle race, where the competitors each play a lone hand, so to speak. In Canada the single-bladed paddle is generally used, while in the United States the double-blade is more frequently seen. In handling the single-blade the paddler's best position is amidships on one

knee, with the other leg extended as a brace in front, and the stroke is made on the same side throughout the race, which rarely exceeds half a mile in length.

With a double-blade a sitting position has been found most advantageous, as it enables the balance to be better preserved, and the canoe to run along on an even keel while the stroke is made on either side alternately. Great skill in the management of the light shallop is required of the competitors in the race, particularly if there be any wind blowing, as then the problem of steering a straight course becomes quite a difficult one. Having to do everything himself, the lone paddler is apt to find his work exceedingly exhausting, and it is no uncommon thing for temporary



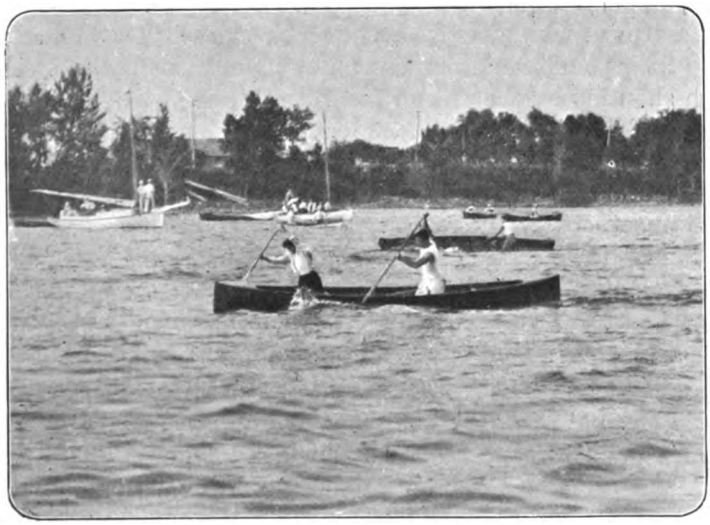
DOUBLE PADDLE

collapse to occur, sometimes involving an upset. But there are always plenty of ready rescuers, so that no casualty ever happens.

The record race for the championship of the American Canoe Association is a whole mile in length, taxing the strength and endurance of the contestants to the very utmost. The double-paddle race, although not such hard work, makes a more interesting spectacle. In this the two paddlers take positions close together, in the middle section of the canoe, dipping their blades on opposite sides, and changing sides from time to time by way of a rest. They must keep perfect stroke, and, so far as possible, exert the same amount of strength, else the canoe will wabble clumsily, and lose headway. The steering is done by the one at the stern, unless there should be a turn in the race, in which case the bow

man by a dexterous use of his paddle, not easily described, swings the canoe round as on a pivot. Cool heads are as necessary in this contest as strong arms, for in the fierce excitement it is easy to lose one's balance, and thus be thrown out of the canoe and the race at the same time.. Only this past season I saw a pair of paddlers, who had their race well in hand, allow themselves to be carried away by the desire to establish a record, with the result that they overdid the thing, and upset within fifty yards of the finish, permitting another pair to win the prize.

Still more exciting is the four-paddle race. For this the crew must be chosen with due regard to weight as well as to strength



DOUBLE PADDLE—UPSET OF ONE CREW

and skill, since a heavy crew will cause the canoe to bury at every stroke, ploughing through the water instead of over it, and consequently losing speed. When there are three or more entries this is a fine event, from a spectator's point of view, the canoes lying so low in the water that they seem to be in constant danger of swamping, the quartettes of paddles plunging simultaneously into the water with the regularity of machinery, the quick change of side when the steersman shouts 'Change over!' the ever-present possibility of collision between the canoes as they are driven down the course, and the cries of the steersmen urging their crew to increased exertion—it is all very stimulating and engrossing.

But the apex of canoe racing is surely to be found in the so-called war-canoe contests, now so popular at Canadian regattas. The war canoe is the mastodon of its kind. It is as strongly built of the best material as a first-class boat, and has seats for no less than fifteen paddlers, including the steersman, who occupies a commanding position in the stern. Such huge craft are, of course, only owned by clubs from whose members their crews are obtained. It is safe to assert that no more thrilling aquatic event can be witnessed than a war-canoe race with half a dozen entries.

Just conceive how impressive is the spectacle of nearly one hundred young men, in the pink of health, pitted against each other, and determined to do their best for victory! Bare-headed, brown-armed, white-jerseyed, they look exceedingly well as they grasp their paddles and prepare to distinguish themselves. After much shouting by the starter for No. 1 to drop back a little, or No. 3 to draw ahead a yard, the canoes are at length ranged in line, and the pistol cracks. Then ensues a struggle that absorbs the attention of every onlooker, and evokes frantic cheers from those most deeply interested. Propelled by so many paddles the canoes fairly surge through the water, leaving behind them swirling wakes like those of a steam-tug. The crews work like demons, and their steersmen yell at them like men possessed. A tremendous effort is always made to be first at the turn, for fouls are hard to avoid in the confusion of that manœuvre. When they straighten out on the home stretch the excitement reaches its height, and thenceforward to the finish pandemonium reigns in that vicinity. As a rule these races are very closely contested, the winners having little to boast of when the exhausting struggle is over.

Interspersed with the more serious items on the programme there usually are several others that partake of the comic in character, and before leaving this part of my subject I will give some description of them. The Hurry-scurry race is very amusing—for the spectators—but hardly so much so for the participants. The details of this race are not always the same, the regatta committee being free to fix them as they please. The following, however, may be taken as a specimen of what the contestants have to do: To run fifty yards, swim twenty-five yards, climb into their canoes and paddle fifty yards, jump overboard, climb into the canoe again, and paddle fifty yards to the finish. There is so much bustle and confusion about the whole thing, the competitors look so ridiculous, as, all dripping, they

strive to get into their canoes, which sometimes seem to buck like Western bronchos; the promptness with which they plunge overboard when the pistol cracks as a signal, and the frantic haste they display in paddling to the finish, keep one laughing through the whole performance.

Two other competitions are more absurd than exciting in their nature.

In Standing on the Gunwale, the contestants, clad only in bathing suits, warily balance themselves astride the canoe with one foot on each gunwale. The position is a difficult one to maintain, and it is, of course, impossible to get up much speed, as very little strength can be put into the stroke, and the canoe

WAR CANOES—THE START

is hard to steer straight. The course rarely exceeds a hundred yards, yet, short as it is, there is usually room for a couple of upsets, which serve to amuse the onlookers.

In Astride the Bow the paddler takes the most awkward attitude that can be imagined, sitting on the triangular bit at the bow, with his feet dangling in the water, and the stern of the canoe high in the air behind him. No small skill is required to preserve this position, as anyone attempting it for the first time will soon discover, the canoe seeming to be possessed with a determination to roll over, especially if the slightest breeze be blowing. A fifty-yard course is quite long enough for this event, and the winner well deserves whatever prize has been allotted to it.

Finally, there is the canoe tournament, which, as a general rule, concludes the programme of the day. This requires two men on each canoe, one to paddle and steer, the other to brandish the lance, which consists of a light bamboo pole, about eight feet in length, bearing at the thin end what looks like a small pudding tied up in a cloth, and is really a round pad made of cotton rags, and designed to prevent the thrusts of the lance causing any injury.

The rival knights of the canoe stand upright amidships, bracing themselves as firmly as they can, while each paddler manœuvres his cranky craft so as, if possible, to approach bow on. Making play with their lances, the antagonists in this novel joust seek the opportunity of administering a thrust that will upset the other's balance, and topple him over into the water, and with this object in view they lunge and parry as rapidly and vigorously as the precarious character of their foothold will permit. No direct blows are sanctioned, and it is a foul to hold on to one's opponent's lance. It is really wonderful how long the contestants will manage to maintain their balance, while the excitement of the shouting spectators reaches fever-heat; but at last one of them receives a thrust that he cannot withstand, or loses his equilibrium in making too fierce a lunge, and overboard he goes, thus confessing defeat.

But this wonderful little craft, which provides so much pleasure for those who know how to manage it aright, is no less available for sails than for paddles, and within recent years has attained a remarkable development as a carrier of canvas. Any ordinary canoe can be fitted with sails, and if lee-boards are used, and a proper amount of sand ballast in bags carried, very fair sailing may be enjoyed.

But the sailing canoe of the present day is a very elaborate affair, in which every detail of construction, rigging, steering-gear, ballast, &c., has been brought so near perfection that it is difficult to see how any great improvement yet remains to be made. The build of this canoe differs materially from that of the paddling canoe. Instead of the hull being as long and narrow as the racing rules will permit, it is short and broad. Moreover, it is entirely decked over with the exception of a small cockpit, into which the feet are put when the strength of the breeze does not render 'hyking out' necessary. The readers of the "BADMINTON" may perhaps be interested in a description of the famous 'Mab,' owned by Mr. Charles E. Archbald, of Toronto, which, in his skilful hands, has proven herself the fastest sailing canoe that

ever skimmed over the water. The 'Mab' was designed and built by Mr. Gilbert, of Brockville, Ontario. Her length is sixteen feet over all. She has a beam of thirty inches, and a maximum depth of eleven inches. The flat floor hitherto used in racing canoes has been abandoned, and she shows a marked dead-rise in her midships section.

Her widest part is about eight feet from the bow. There is no sheer to the deck-line, the gunwale being nearly the same height above the water amidships as it is at the bow and stern. The sliding-seat, which plays so important a part in the working of the canoe—as, without it, the first strong puff of wind would topple her over—is nearly six feet long, and is raised eight inches above the deck. Upon the proper management of this sliding-seat, no less than upon a mastery of the art of sailing, success depends, and the individual who in his person combines the parts of 'captain, crew, and pilot too,' of such a craft as the 'Mab,' must needs be as expert a gymnast as he is navigator.

From the accompanying illustration a better idea will be gained than any verbal description could convey, and it will be readily understood what celerity and sureness of movement is demanded when the wind is squally and treacherous.

'HYKING OUT.'
C. E. ARCHBALD ON THE 'MAB'

The 'Mab's' hull is of carvell construction, with white cedar planking and deck, and through the middle protrudes a centre-board which is a thin plate of steel of the Linton Hope pattern, three feet six inches long, and eighteen inches wide. In everything about the canoe lightness has been carefully studied. Even the spars are hollow, the pine strips being bisected vertically, the halves gouged out and then bound together. The sails, beautifully made of union silk, are of the bat's-wing pattern, and fitted with two battens running from luff to leech, their total area being no less than one hundred and twenty-six feet.

Especially clever and interesting are the steering-gear and the device for letting go the sheet on short notice. The 'Mab' is

fitted with the Norwegian tiller, an arrangement adopted from the Norwegian fishing-boats. In this contrivance a long stick is toggled to one end of the rudder yoke in place of the ordinary rudder chains. The other end of the stick reaches away forward to the deck tiller, which may thus be grasped by the helmsman, and kept in perfect control even though he be far out on the sliding-seat. The sails, being made fast to the mast, only one line to each is required. This is the sheet which is double-ended, and so arranged as to be readily reached on either side of the canoe. It is held by a cam cleat, the cam being provided with a long lever, which may be operated by the toe of the skipper when he is so far out on the sliding-seat that he cannot reach it otherwise. Thus, when struck by a squall, if he sees that his weight is not sufficient to hold the canoe up against it, he can kick the lever, letting the sheet go, and easing off his ticklish craft. But, in spite of all these ingenious devices, and of the skill of the canoeist, upsets are of frequent occurrence, and the veterans become so expert in dealing with them that I have seen one of them, when toppled over by a sudden vicious puff of wind, climb so cleverly up on the bottom of his overturned craft that he hardly got his feet wet.

The righting of the canoe is an easy feat for one who knows how to go about it, and races have again and again been won by resolute competitors who did not allow a couple of sudden upsets to dampen their enthusiasm.

Out of the ever-increasing love for the canoe felt on both sides of the International boundary line has grown the American Canoe Association, which has upon its roll members from almost every Eastern State in the Union and many parts of Canada.

The object of this Association, as set forth in the second article of its constitution, is to unite all amateur canoeists for purposes of pleasure, health, or exploration, by means of meetings for business, camping, paddling, sailing, and racing, and by keeping logs of voyages, records of waterways and routes, drawings of boats, and collections of maps, charts, and books.

Any gentleman over the age of eighteen may become a member if his application be approved, but only canoe owners can be active members. Ladies who are practical canoeists are eligible for Associate membership.

There are four divisions: the Atlantic, Central, Eastern, and Northern, the last-named including all Canada; and while divisional meets are held annually, if practicable, the great event of the year is the meet of the whole Association, which, after

being held in different localities, is now permanently fixed at Stave Island in the St. Lawrence River, on an admirable site kindly donated by its owners for the use of the Association.

This meet is held during the middle of August, and is one of the most delightful outdoor experiences imaginable. The weather is usually perfect, the company of the best, the accommodations comfortable to the verge of luxury, and what with races, excursions, music and mirth, the days and nights slip by all too rapidly.

The cult of the canoe is no passing fancy, no whim of freakish fashion. On the contrary, it is ever extending its sway and deepening its hold upon the young people. These light, graceful craft are multiplying upon the waters. Each recurring summer season sees large additions to the fleet, and canoeing for pleasure has become a thoroughly recognised institution.

CRICKET PARLANCE

BY W. J. FORD

IT is curious to note man's disinclination to call a person or thing by its baptismal name. Call a boy William, and he is promptly known as 'Bill;' a girl Matilda (poor thing!), and she is for ever afterwards 'Maud'—and a very nice name too! Again, we are instructed by advertisement, as well as by proverb, to call a spade a spade; yet the euphuist will describe it as 'an agricultural implement,' &c. &c., while the Whitechapel noblemen call it a—shovel. Whether this habit is due to contrariness, or to a real or false sense of humour, the philosopher must decide, but I cannot help remarking, at the risk of being thought 'shoppy,' that it is not a little interesting that most of the common words in the French language are derived from the slang words, and not the upper-ten words, of Rome; or, to put the matter otherwise, the beautiful language of Cicero, for the non-comprehension of which many of us have been unjustly chastised, has died a well-merited death, while the slang of the Suburra, for the use of which Dominie Orbilius doubtless applied his *ferula* or *scutica*, survives eternal in the 'language of diplomacy.'

But if Roman slang survives in French words which even that august body *L'Académie Française* recognises with all hospitality, what are we to say of the slang which has accumulated round our various sports, and not only adheres to them but grows bulkier day by day?

Golf, as all the world knows, has a language of its own which is hard of acquirement; golfers again have a language of *their*

own, which is acquired with facility and understanded of the people; indeed, I once saw a caddie distinctly laugh when I failed to carry a twenty-yard bunker with my drive, and made some comments on that bunker. Billiards with its 'cannons,' 'hazards,' 'kisses,' 'jennies,' 'stabs,' 'prods,' and the like, has literally dowered our language; which leads me to the inquiry, do we owe the phrase 'So-and-so was on the spot' to cricket or to billiards? The term is applicable to either game. Truth to tell, the slang of all sport, whether it be circumambient slang or comparative slang, is amusing and expressive, and helps out what might otherwise be bald and uninteresting narrative.

The investigation of early cricket history would be doubly interesting if we could find the principles on which distances, sizes, and weights were originally calculated. Twenty-two yards is a 'chain,' so that is easily disposed of; but why is a bat just four and a quarter inches broad? This breadth bears no apparent relation to the eight-inch breadth of the wicket, nor to its twenty-seven inches of height. The distances between the creases and their respective lengths seem to be quite arbitrary, yet they are very good; and very good, too, are the size and weight of the ball, and the dimensions of the bat. Perhaps our forefathers arrived at them all by a simple process of experiment and exhaustion. Passing on, however, to cricket slang, pure and simple, I am not going to classify it under the heads of 'circumambient' ('agricultural implement') or 'comparative' ('shovel,' *vide ante*), but to lump terms and phrases together in a general jumble.

Let us take the ball first; its birth-name will soon be forgotten for its pet-names of 'pill,' 'sphere,' or 'globule,' yet 'ball' is a very good name for it. Now let us regard the ball as bowled with respect to its pace; if the bowler be a fast bowler, he administers 'expresses' or 'lightning deliveries,' and as the pace diminishes we get fast-medium, medium, slow-medium, slows, and eventually the humble 'donkey-drop' (origin unknown, or wisely 'plunged in oblivious silence'), till the graduations are as subtle as the sizes of ladies' gloves. Everyone knows that the bowler is a free agent as far as the height of his delivery is concerned, yet all sorts of contemptuous epithets are showered on an under-hand delivery; if the man bowls fast he sends up 'undergrounds' or 'metropolitans,' 'sneaks' or 'grubs,' or 'many bounders,' terms of obloquy invented either by reporters in quest of variety, or by batsmen who found that this class of bowling interfered with their averages. The slow under-hand bowler is

not so badly treated, even though 'lob' is not dignified, and 'cock-thumbs'—alluding presumably to the position of the fifth (or is it the minus-oneth?) finger at the moment of delivery—is not complimentary. In 'Tom Brown's School-days' we read that 'the captain bowled slow "cobs" to old Mr. Aislabie,' and this is, I take it, the *locus classicus* for the word 'cob,' now unhappily defunct.

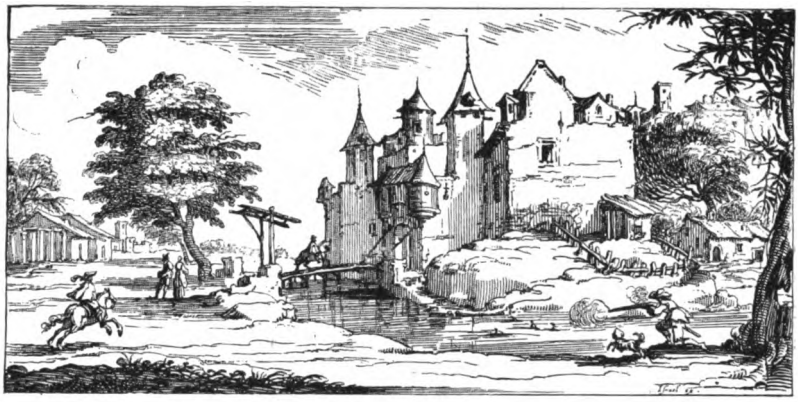
Passing to the 'length' of the ball as delivered, whether over the shoulder, level with the shoulder, or under the shoulder, we find some quite interesting technicalities. The 'full-pitch' and 'home-toss' (archaic, but revived) is not so deadly as to encourage the bowler to indulge freely in it, but the 'yorker' is quite another thing. The G.O.M. of cricket (*Gratia Optima Maxima*) holds that no respectable batsman should be defeated by it; yet few matches are played in which someone does not succumb to its wiles. The origin of the term 'yorker'? 'Punch' is sound on the point, for as the curate said to his inquisitive rector, 'What else could you call it, Sir?' yet 'yorker' is a comparatively modern innovation for 'tice,' and my father, I remember, was quite mystified when we boys brought the phrase home from school, 'familiar in our lips as household words;' such a ball had always been to him and his generation a 'tice' (*en-'ticer'*?) and nothing but a 'tice,' yet I warrant that a good many young players of the modern day have never heard the term. This is a peg on which to hang a mild story. My father was bowling—he was a very respectable amateur bowler—to Bob Grimston, whose defence was of the especially careful type. 'How on earth am I to get this man out?' said my father, most wrongfully, to the umpire; 'he never moves his bat.' 'Give him a tice, sir,' was the answer, equally illegal, 'and he'll move it at once.' Up went the tice, up went the bat, and back went Bob Grimston. The only variation of name for this ball that ever came under my notice was bestowed on it by a victim to a real hot 'un, who turned to the wicket-keeper saying, half to himself, 'Well, that *was* a "chalker"!'

Variants on 'half-volley' are not numerous, though I believe that 'drop-kick'—odious and alien term—still survives at Rugby, and 'barter' at Winchester, but as the latter phrase records the name of a great and powerful smiter, warden of the college, it may well be regarded as a survival of the hittist, just as 'Thorntons' were once a synonym for 'sneaks.' The long-hop, I believe, has no pet name: perhaps it is too precious to the batsman to be insulted.

Premising that the stumps do not lend themselves to any unnatural burst of facetiousness, I should much like to ask again when sizes and distances were first regulated, and by whom? Bat and ball and wicket seem exactly suited to the game, even if the width and height of the wicket are open to argument; but whence comes the delicate adjustment of the ball to a quarter of an ounce? of the bat to a quarter of an inch! a trifle more than half the width of the wicket? Why, too, was the length of the bat limited to thirty-eight inches, when thirty-six inches are found to satisfy the batsman's requirements more satisfactorily? The lengths of the various creases are equally arbitrary, yet they serve their purpose as no other measurements would. Who, too, invented the names of the fieldsman's different positions? Some are obvious enough when certain *data* are admitted, but why 'point'? Why 'on,' 'off,' 'slip,' 'third man'? These are matters for the archæologist of cricket, who might add an appendix on the origin of 'half-volley,' 'break,' 'bye,' and 'crease,' supplemented by a dissertation on 'drawing stumps,' which has a distinctly dental ring and, possibly, origin.

Nothing very humorous has ever been evolved by way of a pet name for a bat. The joke about Jehu must have been good when first perpetrated, but it is now too hoary to command respect, while such terms as 'stick,' 'club,' 'cudgel,' are not only obvious but insipid. If, however, the implement is short of war-names, the individual wielder cannot complain, as the necessity of variety in the matter of report must have driven the unhappy newspaper-man to his wits' end; for after all one cricket match is very like another, and one stroke almost identical with its first cousins, even if the one be termed a 'cut' (why 'cut'?), and the others 'chop,' 'slice,' or 'steer.' Poor Dr. Grace has been a dreadful source of annoyance to the writer of cricket lore. Such terms as 'mammoth,' 'leviathan,' 'champion,' 'G.O.M.,' soon got played out; 'burly doctor,' 'Gloucestershire crack' (why 'crack'?), 'bowlers' terror,' being inconveniently long, have shared a like fate; indeed, the reports of matches must in the end become mere repetition of phrases, unless the whole nomenclature be reorganised and the game played in a new way! Still much license must be granted in the sacred cause of variety, though an intimate and peculiar knowledge of names of places is desirable if we have to comprehend such a descriptive account as, 'Here the Pudsey giant was confronted by the Driffield crack, and cemented the alliance by snicking one of the "Demon's" fastest to the boundary, just out of the "Guv'nor's" reach.' A

little knowledge is proverbially dangerous, as is well illustrated by the remark of a head-master, more learned in the lore of Greek particles than in the laws of cricket. Appearing on the school-ground when a match was going on, he approached deep-field and asked him in accents of interested inquiry, 'Who's that standing at *long block*?' Deep-field's answer is not recorded, but even the divinity that hedges a head-master did not prevent the irreverent youth from spreading the story abroad.



FORTY MILES ON THE NECKAR IN A RACING FOUR

BY D. D. BRAHAM

SOME four years ago it was my good fortune to spend the greater part of the long vacation in Heidelberg, and while there to be admitted a member of the Heidelberger Ruder Klub—one of the oldest of the many rowing clubs now established in Germany. So far the Ruder Klub has not had a very brilliant career, or met with any startling success at the German regattas. Many explanations have been given of this, but the most probable is that which ascribes the poor success the club has met with to the action of the different Studentenverbindungen to which its members belong. These clubs, which mainly concern themselves with the promotion of duelling and beer-drinking, forbid their members to take any active part, during term-time, in the work of any other society, and thus the majority of the students who belong to the Ruder Klub find it impossible to row except in vacation. That the club continues to exist in spite of these obstacles is mainly due to the energy and enthusiasm of its president, Dr. Ullrich, than whom it would be impossible to find a keener sportsman. The Doctor was never tired of rating us for our slackness, and contrasting our achievements with those of his contemporaries, most of whom, so he assured us, had at different times taken their boats miles up the river, while none of us had ever been beyond Neckargemünd, a little village a few miles above Heidelberg. At last five of us, moved by his taunts, resolved to

see how far we could get, and planned a great expedition up the Neckar.

Assmy the Mediziner, whom we unanimously elected captain, was a well-known man in Heidelberg. Though not nearly six feet in height, he scaled over thirteen stone. Deep-chested and long-limbed, he was a fine gymnast, a good swimmer and a noted duellist. He claimed to have fought in every University in Germany, and bore the scars of innumerable wounds. He couldn't row, indeed none of us could, but we relied upon his determination and physical strength to carry us through, and events justified the confidence we placed in him. His crew consisted of two other Germans, Müller and Berker, a Frenchman, Louis Labbez, and one Englishman, myself. Müller and Berker were both Juristen, or law students, and men of a very different build to Assmy. Tall, fair, and well-proportioned, they were fine types of the German student, but lacked the vitality and staying power of our captain. Labbez was a mere boy, with plenty of go, but by no means strong. We took him with us on account of his skill at the rudder lines, which was really remarkable. The boat we decided to make use of was an old racing four of B.N.C., which the club had purchased from Messrs. Salter, and rechristened the 'Emil.' Taken altogether we possessed plenty of strength and staying power. We cherished no illusions about our style, which was execrable, but knew we could row a long hard stroke and keep it up. So we set out with every intention of equalling, if not surpassing, our president's performances of fifteen years ago.

Punctually at 5.30 on the morning of Sunday, September 2, 1895, we met at our clubhouse just below the New Bridge. There we changed into rowing things, and made a start a few minutes before six. Müller took the rudder lines, Assmy went stroke, I was three, Berker two, and Labbez bow. Covering the first kilometre at a leisurely pace, we reached the Old Bridge, where we encountered the first and, as we fondly hoped, the greatest of our difficulties. About a mile above the Old Bridge, and just below the 'Zum Adler' pleasure gardens, the river is compressed into a channel of half its normal width, and forms the rapid so appropriately named the 'Hackteufel.' Before it reaches the bridge it broadens out again, but the greater part of the water sweeps under the centre arch and gives fair warning of what to expect from the main body of the rapid. As soon as he felt the water quicken underneath him, Assmy swung out to the full length of his stroke, and called upon us for a spurt. Fairly extending ourselves, we got through the bridge after a shorter struggle than we

had dared to hope. Before we were fully aware of it, we were in the Hackteufel itself, and had to row for all we were worth. At times we scarcely seemed to move, but at last, after twenty minutes of almost desperate rowing, we reached smoother water, and paddling to the landing stage of the 'Zum Adler,' called our first halt. Our captain gave us a rest of nearly a quarter of an hour, and then took us on once more. From the 'Zum Adler' to Neckargemünd we had a good five miles of almost smooth water, though the current of course was still a strong one. Moving at a regular and easy stroke, we were able to give some of our attention to the scenery, which in this reach of the Neckar is really superb, far superior, I always think, to that of the often over-rated Rhine. The river is, of course, not so broad, but the mountains between which it flows are covered with pine forest. Here and there one catches glimpses of ruined castles, and red-roofed, walled-in villages, and the effect is much more picturesque than that of the somewhat monotonous vineyards of the Rhine country. It was between seven and eight when we reached Neckargemünd, and felt that we had really begun our journey. Our intention was to go on to Neckarsteinach, which lies about twenty kilometres above Heidelberg, and of this distance we had already covered the first half.

The Griechische Weinstube at Neckargemünd is a well-known resort of pleasure-seekers from Heidelberg, and there it was that we determined to breakfast and take a rest. We found ourselves the object of much observation, for, to our great surprise, the Weinstube was already crowded with visitors. It was the twenty-fifth anniversary of the battle of Sedan and, of course, a national holiday. The inn was gaily decorated with bunting, and all, visitors and servants, were in their best. As may be imagined our rowing costume created much excitement. The rest of us were not so bad, for we had brought coats in the bottom of the boat, and wore stockings which, when pulled up over our knees, made us quite presentable. But poor Labbez! He had very long legs and very short shorts, and wore socks which hung loosely about his ankles. We managed to keep him in our midst till we could stow him away in a corner out of sight, and, though many of the visitors looked very shocked, no protest was made. Our breakfast was an extraordinary one, and would have broken the heart of any coach responsible for our training. Soda-water, café au lait, chocolate, beer and wine were among the drinks; bread, eggs, sausages, and cakes among the eatables. However, we took our time over it, and gave ourselves a long rest

before resuming our journey. To tell the truth, the remainder of our task rather frightened us. We had accomplished half of what we had set ourselves to do as regards mere distance, but the rest of the course was unknown to any of us except by report, and had for us all the terrors of the unknown. We had heard too of long stretches of rapids, including a very famous one, the Spielmannsfuss. However, we had no thought of shirking, and about nine we made our second start.

This time Labbez took his place at the stern, Assmy went three, Müller two, Berker bow, and I was moved forward to stroke. A number of people came down to see us start, and we received quite an ovation as we set off. The spectators cheered, Labbez waved his hand theatrically from the stern to thank them, cried 'Vive la France—Row!' and we dashed off. Moving at a fair pace we soon lost sight of Neckargemünd, and were in unknown waters. We found before long that we had not overestimated our difficulties. The pieces of smooth water became rarer and shorter, and the stream under us a little too lively to be pleasant. However our cox came to our rescue in gallant style, and showed a wonderful aptitude for cutting off corners and keeping in smooth water wherever possible. Castles and churches and villages disappeared behind us, and were hid from view by the bends of the river. We were making headway even if but slowly. The men behind me kept perfect time, and everyone who has ever stroked a boat knows what a difference that makes both to the speed of the boat and the stroke's comfort. Badly as we all rowed, the sheer strength of the three bow oars made up for our deficiencies of style, and we felt that we were indeed doing well when our cox, with a triumphant shout, announced that we were within a few minutes of Dilberg. Unfortunately it was a false alarm. Dilberg was in sight, it is true, but still some way off. A town of the most romantic and mediæval aspect, it stands on the top of a mountain almost encircled by the Neckar. Its towers and churches, and even the red-tiled wall which surrounds them, are visible for miles. As we drew near we first saw the town on our right, and then, the river taking a sharp bend, it shifted to our left. Our course took us right round it, and finally struck off sharp to the right again. After passing Dilberg we took a short rest, but Assmy soon called us out again, and, after a short spell of pleasant water, we found ourselves in the dreaded Spielmannsfuss. We had thought the Hackteufel a grind, and had fondly hoped, when we had safely negotiated it, that the worst of our journey was over.

BY MEANS OF SHARP BURSTS WE MANAGED TO MAKE OUR WAY UP THE RAPID FROM ROCK TO ROCK

We were rudely disillusioned. A formidable looking rapid of nearly two kilometres in length lay in front of us. Bit by bit we fought our way up till about two hundred yards from the end. There we simply stood still in spite of all our efforts. But Labbez was equal to the occasion. Steering us cleverly over some rough ground, he brought us up under the shelter of some rocks, where we held a council of war. Looking ahead we saw the rapid was caused by a huge group of rocks which blocked up one side of the river. From this dam to below us the river was divided into two parts by a chain of rocks. On our left was the rapid, on our right a shallower, slower stream which, however, looked very dangerous on account of the rocks it was studded with. Labbez undertook to take us safely between them, and then into the rapid about twenty yards below the dam through an opening in the rocks separating it from the rest of the stream. This sounded dangerous, but, as it was the only plan at all feasible, we were forced to adopt it. Our cox took us safely into the opening, and through it into the rapid, but too sharply. The stream almost turned us round, and before we could get the head of the boat straight again we had lost nearly all our way. In spite of discouragements we did not give in at once. Rowing all we knew we crawled up a bit, but about ten yards from the head of the rapid we came to a dead stop. I fixed my eye on a bush just behind us and saw the distance between it and us lengthen during the strokes only to decrease again as we came forward. At last we were exhausted and began to lose ground. Then we eased a little and allowed ourselves to be swept down till we found another opening by which Labbez could take us into smoother water. There we sought the shelter of a friendly rock and again discussed the situation. We were resolved not to give in, and by Assmy's advice tried a new plan. By means of sharp bursts we managed to make our way up the rapid from rock to rock, sheltering behind one till we were ready to make a dash for the next. At first this worked well enough, but when we got near the head of the rapid we found there were no more rocks we could shelter under and the piece left was too long to do in one burst without any way on, so back we drifted again. The two bow oars were now for admitting ourselves beaten, but to this Assmy would not listen for a moment, and we decided to give Labbez's old plan another trial. This time he took us beautifully into the rapid, keeping the boat's head almost straight. Then we knew we had our chance, and used it. Working like galley slaves we drew up inch by inch, at times so slowly that I

feared our captain would once more give the signal for retreat. But no, Assmy was made of sterner stuff and we stuck to it. At last our cox gave a great shout. 'Enfin! Encore deux coups, et nous y sommes!' Deux coups! It was more like forty, but still we had succeeded and at last forced our way out of the rapid. Labbez took us straight across to a bend in the river where we could rest, and after we had congratulated him, and he us, we rowed round into Neckarsteinach. There we tied up our boat, and walked into the nearest hotel. We found a great banquet in progress. The inhabitants, like loyal Germans, were celebrating the anniversary of Sedan. In spite of the crush, however, we managed to secure a table and some lunch, to which, needless to say, we did ample justice. Then we found ourselves at a loss. It was still early in the day, and there was nothing we could do at Neckarsteinach in our to-Germans-unaccustomed-and-all-the-proprieties-outraging costume. (The phrase, by the way, is Assmy's, not mine.) To return to Heidelberg would have been foolish, as we should have found all our friends taking part in the national rejoicings, and it would have been impossible for us to join them without hurting Labbez's feelings. At last some one, more enterprising than the rest, suggested that we should not rest content with what we had done but try a still bolder flight and make for Eberbach, a small town thirteen kilometres further up the river. This suggestion met with the enthusiastic reception it deserved, and off we set once more.

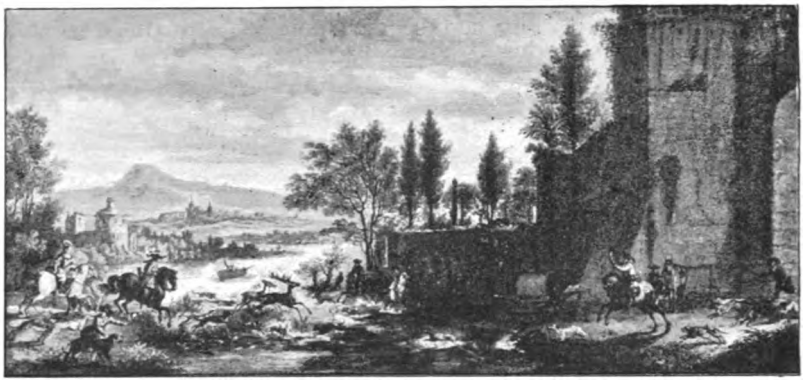
Labbez still kept his place as cox, but we tried a rearrangement of oars. Assmy went stroke, Müller came forward to three, Berker to two, and I went bow. At first we moved along at a great pace, but it was now the hottest part of the day, and the sun beating down on our backs in a most demoralizing way soon caused us to moderate our efforts. Luckily we found the water fairly smooth, and the few rapids we did meet were quite paltry affairs. Another Hackteufel or Spielmannsfuss would have settled us. As it was, after a dreary grind of nearly an hour and a half, we succeeded in reaching Eberbach. No one suggested going further, nor, if any one had, would he have been listened to. We were only too glad to make our boat fast to the stage and feel that we had seen the last of it for some time.

Our first business was to get cool. Fortunately the hotel was close to the river and quite deserted, so we stripped in the courtyard, and turned the hose on to one another till we began to feel a little better. Then we made for the river again, where we hoped to enjoy a really luxurious bathe. That, however, we found

impossible. Though it had seemed so feeble to us after our experiences lower down, the current even here was much too strong for pleasant bathing. Assmy was the only one who managed to cross the river, and even he was carried a long way down, and experienced some difficulty in effecting a landing. The rest of us made but a poor display. Our bathing over, we returned to the hotel for dinner, and made a famous meal, even Labbez declaring that German cooking could be very appetising. We sat for hours round the table, talking, smoking and playing cards, and it was only when it began to get dusk that we remembered we were thirty-three kilometres (about twenty miles) from home, and once more took to our boat.

In all my life I do not remember enjoying anything more than I did our return journey. Though we were careful to do no more work than was necessary to make the boat answer to the rudder, the stream took us along at a great pace. The dusk gradually faded into starlight and lent an added air of romance, even of unreality, to the scenery. In all the villages the inhabitants had gathered together in their schools and churches to celebrate the victories which had united the Fatherland. The valley was filled with the sound of bells, and the deep notes of German hymns and Volkslieder floated to us over the water. We were all, even the Frenchman our cox, constrained to silence as we glided swiftly down the stream. From time to time we would knock our oars against a sunken rock, or see a sharp point disappear behind us into the gathering darkness, and recall with a start that we were not in dreamland, but miles from home, with night drawing dangerously near, and only a skinboat between us and the rushing waters of the Neckar.

Thanks to Labbez, however, we reached Heidelberg without an accident, and found racing down the rapids a much more pleasant, even if a somewhat more dangerous, experience than fighting our way up them. At half-past nine we reached our landing stage, the 'Emil' was lifted out of the water, and packed away in the boathouse. We resumed the garments of civilisation, and ten o'clock found us, where it generally finds the German student, seated in a beer-garden drinking deep draughts of Münchener to the memory of a glorious day.



FIELD AND FLOOD

BY ANTHONY C. DEANE

It was one of those July days when intervals of perfect summer sunshine alternate with brief but heavy thunder-showers, and weather of this kind, if full of suggestion to the poet, is distinctly irritating to the cricketer. For the third time that afternoon we had been driven back to the pavilion, where, besides the players, a good many of the spectators had been forced to take shelter. Down came the rain in torrents, and we regarded it mournfully, wondering whether, even if the shower were quickly over, the wicket would not be so soaked as to make any further play impossible. Indeed, some of our opponents, who had been fielding most of the day, were already suggesting that we should 'chuck it' and adjourn to the club for a game of pool. While, in company with two others of our team, I was execrating the weather, and speculating when the umpires would decide to draw stumps, one of the spectators came up and joined in our conversation. He was a little old man, attired rather after the fashion of a gamekeeper; but, despite his white hair, his eyes were bright, and his cheeks as ruddy as one of his own Devonshire apples.

'No moör play, I rackon?' he inquired.

'Doesn't look like it,' I answered; 'the water will be standing on the pitch directly.'

He smiled scornfully. 'Iss, sure, an' your boots would get mucky for sartin; like enough there'll be a drop o' rain to-morrer, so 'twull be a drawn match. Ah, well, 't wor different

when I was young—dear heart alive, cricket wor different then. 'Twaun't a drop of watter as would 'a stopped us then—whoy, vorty year this month I mind—but I be introodin' on you gennelmen.'

We hastened to reassure him, and some one offered him a tobacco pouch. Our friend filled a beautifully coloured clay, touched his cap in acknowledgment, and resumed:

'Vorty year ago I wor under-keeper to Squire Middleton, over to Appleford, and never wor a viner gennelman, if a bit stubborn-like o' a Saturday night, when 'ed taken 'is second bottle. An' as for cricket—wull, 'e wor fair 'mazed o' the game. Played it, 'e did, arl thro' summer in the park, and wouldn't 'ave man or boy on the estate but what could 'andle a bat. I mind as 'ow Joe Skinner 'pplied for gardener's place, and was wantin' to tull Squire o' the wunnerful roses and cider-apples 'e'd grown. Squire pulls 'im up all short. "Silence, sir!" 'e cries with a great oath—free in 'is spache Squire wor—"can you play a shooter? Baines!" I was close by, same as I'm tullin' you, when Squire called me, "Take him away and give him a dozen balls, and let me know what he can do!" Zo I did accordin', an' upset Joe's wicket three times wi' my leg twisters. But I saw there were promise i' the lad, so Joe, 'e was made under-gardener that same day. Aye, an' I minds when Squire's first babby was born, 'ow Parson shakes 'is 'and, saying 'ow glad 'e feels that 'tis "a son and heir." "'Tis better than that," sez Squire, "'tis a cricketer!"'

'Wull, as I be tullin' you, every evenin' through the summer every man jack of us 'ad to play cricket i' the park—butler, footmen, gardeners, keepers, and a'—with the Squire lukin' on an' takin' a hand himsel' now and agen. Wot with so much practice, there weren't a village for miles round that we couldn't beat, easy as smilin', and most on 'em were clean feared to play us.

'Matter o' vive mile away, over to Dycombe, lived Squire Wright, and, 'ceptin' 'e wor fond o' cricket too, no man could be more unlike Squire Middleton than 'im. A thin little man, wi' a face on him like a weasel's, an' a terrible quiet way of spakin'. But, dear heart! if Squire Wright once set his mind on anything, 'twere arl Christendom to a brass farden as 'ed get it—an' not too partic'lar, neither, 'ow 'twas come by.

'Wull, they Dycombe folk boasted somethin' sinful 'bout their wunnerful cricket, and every one o' us Appleford men were wishful to play 'em. Th' old Squire wished it too, an' tried arl 'e could to arrange a game. But Squire Wright, 'e 'aggled 'bout it, stipulatin' this, an' demandin' that, till Squire Middleton,

who'd ridden over a-perpus for to fix a day, were well-nigh crazy —so I 'eard later from 'is butler.

'"'Ave it your own way, then!" roars Squire Middleton. "I and my men will come over and play on your ground. D'you think we're frightened of a set of Dycombe rascals? As for umpires, we'll have the parish constables from Ditchley and Netherton—they'll see fair play and no favour. And I'll lay you fifty guineas that we win!"

'"Done," sez Squire Wright, very quiet-like. "Allow me to make a note of it," an' 'e scribbles awhile on a bit o' paper. "Here then," 'e sez, "are the conditions. First: the match to be played at Dycombe on Saturday next, commencing at two o'clock, and to be decided by a single innings on each side. Second: only players residing within three miles of Appleford and Dycombe parish churches respectively to take part in it. Third: the umpires to be the constables of Ditchley and Netherton. Fourth: in the event of rain making play impossible"— "Zounds, sir," roars Squire Middleton, who'd been growin' angrier and angrier durin' the readin', till at last 'e fair biled over, "that's enough! D'you think I'm a lawyer, with your confounded haggling and bargaining? Event of rain, indeed! If the floodgates of Heaven," 'e sez, "yes, if the floodgates of Heaven are opened next Saturday, it won't save you and your Dycombe rascals from the drubbing you deserve!"

'Wull, gennelmen, it did seem as though the rain 'ad 'eard Squire spaking, and wor bent on gettin' level with 'im, for there came a tidyish drap o' watter on Monday, a reg'lar soaker on Tuesday, and after that steady rain every day for the rest o' the week. By the day o' the match the floods wor out all over the valley, an' the rain still pourin' down as if 'twere minded never to give over. Howsomever, Squire 'ad passed 'is word, so play we must. So 'bout one o'clock, us arl started in Farmer Tomkin's waggon for to go to Dycombe, wi' Dan'l Hook playin' on 'is cornet as we went. Twice we stuck fast in the mire, the lanes were that mucky. But we got to Dycombe in time, an' at two o'clock the match began.

'Squire Wright's land lay pretty high, yet the field were more like a marsh than a cricket-ground, an' smarl wonder, considerin' the rain. Girt pules o' watter stood on it, an' Squire Wright asks, very sollum-like, if we can swim. 'E won the toss, an' Dycombe went in to bat.

''Twere the funniest cricket as ever I saw. The bowlin' wor underhand in those days, fast an' low, an' the way the ball came

skittery-skattery 'long the pitch wor wunnerful, splashin' in the water as it went. You wull rackon as 'twere no easy matter to make runs. 'Twor wettest of all i' the deep field, an' presently a coorious thing 'appened. One of the Dycombe men 'its a ball to long-on, where Dan'l Hook wor fieldin'; 'e started runnin' in and just catches the ball as it dropped splosh i' the watter. Arl of us cheered, but Squire Wright, who was battin' t'other end, sez very sharp:

'"That's not out!"

'"Not out?" cries Squire Middleton. "Rubbish, sir! 'Twas a fair catch!"

'Squire Wright, 'e argues to prove it worn't, sayin' that the ball 'ad touched the watter, as the splash showed, before 'twas held. But our Squire, he declares that the rules say as 'tis a catch if so be 'tis held before the ball touches the ground, an' nothin' said 'bout watter. The umpire thought so too, and the batsman 'ad to go. Squire Wright, 'e sez no more, but 'e looked more wild than I can tell you.

'The Dycombe folk made but twenty-seven runs arl told, no great score, o' coörse, an' on a dry wicket, or even on a mod'rate wet one, us would 'a thought nothin' of it. But, dear heart alive, us knew 'twould be none too easy to win that day, 'specially as the rain still came pouring down; every man of us were fair soaked through, an' pitch grew worser than ever. Try 'ow we would, us could only get a single 'ere and there, an' the score were just twenty-four—three short o' Dycombe—when Bill Conant, our last man, comes in, I bein' at t'other end, 'avin' made two runs in 'arf-an-hour or thereabouts.

'"For gudeness sake keep a straight bat!" sez I to Bill, an' 'e nods back, very confident. Squire Wright shifts the field about, an' comes in 'imself at point till 'e's only a foot or two from the bat. "Lord pity 'im if Bill gets one on the off!" thinks I, an' sure enough, the very first ball Bill 'as is just clear o' the off stump. 'E let fly at it clean, but missed it, 'ittin' the ground instead, an' sendin' up a girt splash o' mud which lands full i' the middle of Squire Wright's face! I larfed so as I well-nigh busted, an' the Dycombe men, who dursen't even smile, suffered somethin' cruel! But Squire Wright, soon as 'ed got enough mud out of 'is mouth to spake, turns sharp to th' umpire and sez.

'"How's that?"

'"Eh?" sez th' umpire, not rightly understandin' if 'twere a joke.

'"How's that?" repeats Squire Wright, very fierce. "The rule says the batsman is out if he obstructs the field, and if bunging up a man's face with mire isn't obstructing him, I don't know what is!"

'"What's all this?" cries Squire Middleton, hurrying out of the tent. "What in the name of Heaven are you up to now, Mr. Wright?"

'Squire Wright takes no notice of 'im but glares at th' umpire.

'"Look here, my man," 'e sez, "look at my face! Could I see to field with my eyes full of the mud which the batsman put there?"

'"Naw," sez th' umpire, doubtful-like. "Naw, sir, you couldn't."

'"Then," cries Squire Wright, "he's obstructed the field—and you know the rule! How's that?"

'"Out, I s'pose!" sez that idiot, scratchin' 'is 'ead. An' out it wor.

'Wull, gennelmen, I won't tull you what Squire Middleton said, 'cos 'is language wor main powerful. But 'ed lost fifty guineas, an' Dycombe won the match. Soon after—ah, they're pullin' up the stumps now! No moör play, so I'll wish you gude-day, gennelmen!' and he departed, while we put on our mackintoshes and wandered off in the direction of the club.

SOME EXPERIENCES OF AN IRISH R.M.

BY E. Œ. SOMERVILLE AND MARTIN ROSS

No. XII.—'OH LOVE! OH FIRE!'

It was on one of the hottest days of a hot August that I walked over to Tory Lodge to inform Mr. Flurry Knox, M.F.H., that the limits of human endurance had been reached, and that either Venus and her family, or I and mine, must quit Shreelane. In a moment of impulse I had accepted her and her numerous progeny as guests in my stable-yard, since when my cook, Mrs. Cadogan, had given warning once or twice a week, and Maria, the spaniel whom my wife delighted to honour, had had—I quote the kitchenmaid—'tin battles for every male she'd ate.'

The walk over the hills was not of a nature to lower the temperature, moral or otherwise. The grassy path was as slippery as glass, the rocks radiated heat, the bracken radiated horseflies. There was no need to nurse my wrath to keep it warm.

I found Flurry seated in the kennel-yard in a long and unclean white linen coat, engaged in clipping hieroglyphics on the ears of a young outgoing draft, an occupation in itself un-

favourable to argument. The young draft had already monopolised all possible forms of remonstrance, from snarling in the obscurity behind the meal sack in the boiler-house, to hysterical yelling as they were dragged forth by the tail; but through these alarms and excursions I denounced Venus and all her works, from slaughtered Wyandottes to broken dishes. Even as I did so I was conscious of something chastened in Mr. Knox's demeanour, some touch of remoteness and melancholy with which I was quite unfamiliar; my indictment weakened and my grievances became trivial when laid before this grave and almost religiously gentle young man.

'I'm sorry you and Mrs. Yeates should be vexed by her. Send her back when you like. I'll keep her. Maybe it'll not be for so long after all.'

When pressed to expound this dark saying Flurry smiled wanly and snipped a second line in the hair of the puppy that was pinned between his legs. I was almost relieved when a hard try to bite on the part of the puppy imparted to Flurry's language a transient warmth; but the reaction was only temporary.

'It'd be as good for me to make a present of this lot to old Welby as to take the price he's offering me,' he went on, as he got up and took off his highly-scented kennel-coat, 'but I couldn't be bothered fighting him. Come on in and have something. I drink tea myself at this hour.'

If he had said toast and water it would have seemed no more than was suitable to such a frame of mind. As I followed him to the house I thought that when the day came that Flurry Knox could not be bothered with fighting old Welby things were becoming serious, but I kept this opinion to myself and merely offered an admiring comment on the roses that were blooming on the front of the house.

'I put up every stick of that trellis myself with my own hands,' said Flurry, still gloomily; 'the roses were trailing all over the place for the want of it. Would you like to have a look at the garden while they're getting tea? I settled it up a bit since you saw it last.'

I acceded to this almost alarmingly ladylike suggestion, marvelling greatly.

Flurry certainly was a changed man, and his garden was a changed garden. It was a very old garden, with unexpected arbours madly overgrown with flowering climbers, and a flight of grey steps leading to a terrace, where a moss-grown sundial and ancient herbaceous plants strove with nettles and briars; but I

chiefly remembered it as a place where washing was wont to hang on black-currant bushes, and the kennel terrier matured his bones and hunted chickens. There was now rabbit wire on the gate, the walks were cleaned, the beds weeded. There was even a bed of mignonette, a row of sweet pea, and a blazing party of sunflowers, and Michael, once second in command in many a filibustering expedition, was now on his knees, ingloriously tying carnations to little pieces of cane..

We walked up the steps to the terrace. Down below us the rich and southern blue of the sea filled the gaps between scattered fir-trees; the hill-side above was purple with heather; a bay mare and her foal were moving lazily through the bracken, with the sun glistening on it and them. I looked back at the house, nestling in the hollow of the hill, I smelled the smell of the mignonette in the air, I regarded Michael's labouring back among the carnations, and without any connection of ideas I seemed to see Miss Sally Knox, with her golden-red hair and slight figure, standing on the terrace beside her kinsman.

'Michael! Do ye know where's Misther Flurry?' squalled a voice from the garden gate, the untrammelled voice of the female domestic at large among her fellows. 'The tay's wet, and there's a man over with a message from Aussolas. He was tellin' me the old hairo beyant is giving out invitations——'

A stricken silence fell, induced, no doubt, by hasty danger signals from Michael.

'Who's "the old hero beyond"?' I asked, as we turned toward the house.

'My grandmother,' said Flurry, permitting himself a smile that had about as much sociability in it as skim milk; 'she's giving a tenants' dance at Aussolas. She gave one about five years ago, and I declare you might as well get the influenza into the country, or a mission at the chapel. There won't be a servant in the place will be able to answer their name for a week after it, what with toothache and headache, and blathering in the kitchen!'

We had tea in the drawing-room, a solemnity which I could not but be aware was due to the presence of a new carpet, a new wall-paper, and a new piano. Flurry made no comment on these things, but something told me that I was expected to do so, and I did.

'I'd sell you the lot to-morrow for half what I gave for them,' said my host, eyeing them with morose respect as he poured out his third cup of tea.

I have all my life been handicapped by not having the courage of my curiosity. Those who have the nerve to ask direct questions on matters that do not concern them seldom fail to extract direct answers, but in my lack of this enviable gift I went home in the dark as to what had befallen my landlord, and fully aware of how my wife would despise me for my shortcomings. Philippa always says that she never asks questions, but she seems none the less to get a lot of answers.

On my own avenue I met Miss Sally Knox riding away from the house on her white cob; she had found no one at home, and she would not turn back with me, but she did not seem to be in any hurry to ride away. I told her that I had just been over to see her relative, Mr. Knox, who had informed me that he meant to give up the hounds, a fact in which she seemed only conventionally interested. She looked pale, and her eyelids were slightly pink; I checked myself on the verge of asking her if she had hay-fever, and inquired instead if she had heard of the tenants' dance at Aussolas. She did not answer at first, but rubbed her cane up and down the cob's clipped toothbrush of a mane. Then she said:

'Major Yeates—look here—there's a most awful row at home!'

I expressed incoherent regret, and wished to my heart that Philippa had been there to cope with the situation.

'It began when Mama found out about Flurry's racing Sultan, and then came our dance——'

Miss Sally stopped; I nodded, remembering certain episodes of Lady Knox's dance.

'And—Mama says—she says——'

I waited respectfully to hear what Mama had said; the cob fidgeted under the attentions of the horseflies, and nearly trod on my toe.

'Well, the end of it is,' she said with a gulp, 'she said such things to Flurry that he can't come near the house again, and I'm to go over to England to Aunt Dora next week. Will you tell Philippa I came to say good-bye to her? I don't think I can get over here again.'

Miss Sally was a sufficiently old friend of mine for me to take her hand and press it in a fatherly manner, but for the life of me I could not think of anything to say, unless I expressed my sympathy with her mother's point of view about detrimentals, which was obviously not the thing to do.

Philippa accorded to my news the rare tribute of speechless

attention, and then was despicable enough to say that she had foreseen the whole affair from the beginning.

'From the day that she refused him in the ice-house, I suppose,' said I sarcastically.

'That *was* the beginning,' replied Philippa oracularly.

'Well,' I went on judicially, 'whenever it began, it was high time for it to end. She can do a good deal better than Flurry.'

Philippa became rather red in the face.

'I call that a thoroughly commonplace thing to say,' she said. 'I dare say he has not many ideas beyond horses, but no

I MET MISS SALLY KNOX RIDING AWAY FROM THE HOUSE ON HER WHITE COB

more has she, and he really does come and borrow books from me——'

'Whitaker's Almanack,' I murmured.

'Well, I don't care, I like him very much, and I know what you're going to say, and you're wrong, and I'll tell you why——'

Here Mrs. Cadogan came into the room, her cap at rather more than its usual warlike angle over her scarlet forehead, and in her hand a kitchen plate, on which a note was ceremoniously laid forth.

'But this is for you, Mrs. Cadogan,' said Philippa, as she looked at it.

'Ma'am,' returned Mrs. Cadogan with immense dignity, 'I have no learning, and from what the young man's afther telling

me that brought it from Aussolas, I'd sooner yerself read it for me than thim gerrls.'

My wife opened the envelope, and drew forth a gilt-edged sheet of pink paper.

'Miss Margaret Nolan presents her compliments to Mrs. Cadogan,' she read, 'and I have the pleasure of telling you that the servants of Aussolas is inviting you and Mr. Peter Cadogan, Miss Mulrooney, and Miss Gallagher'—Philippa's voice quavered perilously—'to a dance on next Wednesday. Dancing to begin at seven o'clock, and to go on till five. Yours affectionately, MAGGIE NOLAN.'

'How affectionate she is!' snorted Mrs. Cadogan; 'them's Dublin manners, I dare say!'

'P.S.,' continued Philippa; 'steward, Mr. Denis O'Loughlin; stewardess, Mrs. Mahony.'

'Thoughtful provision,' I remarked; 'I suppose Mrs. Mahony's duties will begin after supper.'

'Well, Mrs. Cadogan,' said Philippa, quelling me with a glance, 'I suppose you'd all like to go?'

'As for dancin',' said Mrs. Cadogan, with her eyes fixed on a level with the curtain-pole, 'I thank God I'm a widow, and the only dancin' I'll do is to dance to my grave.'

'Well, perhaps Julia, and Annie, and Peter——' suggested Philippa, considerably overawed.

'I'm not one of them that holds with loud mockery and harangues,' continued Mrs. Cadogan, 'but if I had any wish for dhrawing down talk I could tell you, ma'am, that the like o' them has their share of dances without going to Aussolas! Wasn't it only last Sunday week I wint follyin' the turkey that's layin' out in the plantation, and the whole o' thim hysted their sails and back with them to their lovers at the gate-house, and the kitchenmaid having a Jew-harp to be playing for them!'

'That was very wrong,' said the truckling Philippa. 'I hope you spoke to the kitchenmaid about it.'

'Is it spake to thim?' rejoined Mrs. Cadogan. 'No, but what I done was to dhrag the kitchenmaid round the passages by the hair o' the head!'

'Well, after that, I think you might let her go to Aussolas,' said I venturously.

The end of it was that every one in and about the house went to Aussolas on the following Wednesday, including Mrs. Cadogan. Philippa had gone over to stay at the Shutes, ostensibly to arrange about a jumble sale, the real object

being (as a matter of history) to inspect the Scotch young lady before whom Bernard Shute had dumped his affections in his customary manner. Being alone, with every prospect of a bad dinner, I accepted with gratitude an invitation to dine and sleep at Aussolas and see the dance; it is only on very special occasions that I have the heart to remind Philippa that she had neither part nor lot in what occurred—it is too serious a matter for trivial glory-ings.

Mrs. Knox had asked me to dine at six o'clock, which meant that I arrived, in blazing sunlight and evening clothes, punctually at that hour, and that at seven o'clock I was still sitting in the library, reading heavily-bound classics, while my hostess held loud conversations down staircases with Denis O'Loughlin, the red-bearded Robinson Crusoe who combined in himself the offices of coachman, butler, and, to the best of my belief, valet to the lady of the house. The door opened at last, and Denis, looking as furtive as his prototype after he had sighted the footprint, put in his head and beckoned to me.

'The misthress says will ye go to dinner without her,' he said, very confidentially; 'sure she's greatly vexed ye should be waitin' on her. 'Twas the kitchen chimney cot fire, and faith she's afther giving Biddy Mahony the sack, on the head of it! Though, indeed, 'tis little we'd regard a chimney on fire here any other day.'

Mrs. Knox's woolly dog was the sole occupant of the dining-room when I entered it; he was sitting on his mistress's chair, with all the air of outrage peculiar to a small and self-important dog when routine has been interfered with. It was difficult to discover what had caused the delay, the meal, not excepting the

soup, being a cold collation; it was heavily flavoured with soot, and was hurled on to the table by Crusoe in spasmodic bursts, contemporaneous, no doubt, with Biddy Mahony's fits of hysterics in the kitchen. Its most memorable feature was a noble lake trout, which appeared in two jagged pieces, a matter lightly alluded to by Denis as the result of 'a little argument' between himself and Biddy as to the dish on which it was to be served. Further conversation elicited the interesting fact that the combatants had pulled the trout in two before the matter was settled. A brief glance at my attendant's hands decided me to let the woolly dog justify his existence by consuming my portion for me, a task he ably performed when Crusoe left the room.

Old Mrs. Knox remained invisible till the end of dinner, when she appeared in the purple velvet bonnet that she was reputed to have worn since the famine, and a dun-coloured woollen shawl fastened by a splendid diamond brooch, that flashed rainbow fire against the last shafts of sunset. There was a fire in the old lady's eye, too, the light that I had sometimes seen in Flurry's in moments of crisis.

'I have no apologies to offer that are worth hearing,' she said, 'but I have come to drink a glass of port wine with you, if you will so far honour me, and then we must go out and see the ball. My grandson is late, as usual.'

She crumbled a biscuit with a brown and preoccupied hand; her claw-like fingers carried a crowded sparkle of diamonds upwards as she raised her glass to her lips.

The twilight was falling when we left the room and made our way down stairs. I followed the little figure in the purple bonnet through dark regions of passages and doorways, where strange lumber lay about; there was a rusty suit of armour, an upturned punt, mouldering pictures, and finally, by a door that opened into the yard, a lady's bicycle, white with the dust of travel. I supposed this latter to have been imported from Dublin by the fashionable Miss Maggie Nolan, but on the other hand it was well within the bounds of possibility that it belonged to old Mrs. Knox. The coach-house at Aussolas was on a par with the rest of the establishment, being vast, dilapidated, and of unknown age. Its three double doors were wide open, and the guests overflowed through them into the cobble-stoned yard; above their heads the tin reflectors of paraffin lamps glared at us from among the Christmas decorations of holly and ivy that festooned the walls. The voices of a fiddle and a concertina, combined, were uttering a polka with shrill and hideous fluency,

to which the scraping and stamping of hob-nailed boots made a ponderous bass accompaniment.

Mrs. Knox's donkey-chair had been placed in a commanding position at the top of the room, and she made her way slowly to it, shaking hands with all varieties of tenants and saying right things without showing any symptom of that flustered boredom that I have myself exhibited when I went round the men's messes on Christmas Day. She took her seat in the donkey-chair, with the white dog in her lap, and looked with her hawk's eyes round the array of faces that hemmed in the space where the dancers were solemnly bobbing and hopping.

'Will you tell me who that tomfool is, Denis?' she said, pointing to a young lady in a ball dress who was circling in conscious magnificence and somewhat painful incongruity in the arms of Mr. Peter Cadogan.

'That's the lady's maid from Castle Knox, yer honour, ma'am,' replied Denis, with something remarkably like a wink at Mrs. Knox.

'When did the Castle Knox servants come?' asked the old lady, very sharply.

'The same time yer honour left the table, and—— Pillilew! What's this?'

There was a clatter of galloping hoofs in the courtyard, as of a troop of cavalry, and out of the heart of it Flurry's voice shouting to Denis to drive out the colts and shut the gates before they had the people killed. I noticed that the colour had risen to Mrs. Knox's face, and I put it down to anxiety about her young horses. I may admit that when I heard Flurry's voice, and saw him collaring his grandmother's guests and pushing them out of the way as he came into the coach-house, I rather feared that he was in the condition so often defined to me at Petty Sessions as 'not dhrunk, but having dhrink taken.' His face was white, his eyes glittered, there was a general air of exaltation about him that suggested the solace of the pangs of love according to the most ancient convention.

'Hullo!' he said, swaggering up to the orchestra, 'what's this humbugging thing they're playing? A polka, is it? Drop that, John Casey, and play a jig.'

John Casey ceased abjectly.

'What'll I play, Masther Flurry?'

'What the devil do I care? Here, Yeates, put a name on it! You're a sort of a musicianer yourself!'

I know the names of three or four Irish jigs; but on this

occasion my memory clung exclusively to one, I suppose because it was the one I felt to be peculiarly inappropriate.

'Oh, well, "Haste to the Wedding,"' I said, looking away.

Flurry gave a shout of laughter.

'That's it!' he exclaimed. 'Play it up, John! Give us "Haste to the Wedding." That's Major Yeates' fancy!'

Decidedly Flurry was drunk.

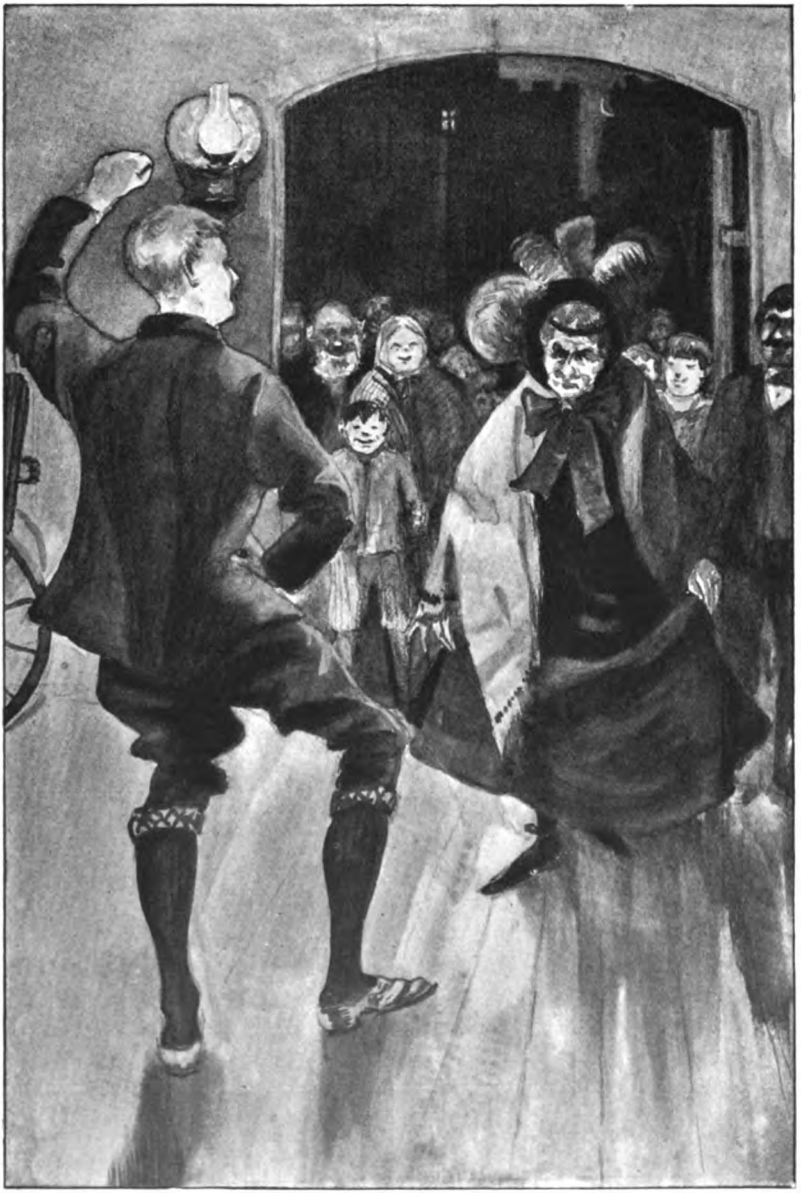
'What's wrong with you all that you aren't dancing?' he said, striding up the middle of the room. 'Maybe you don't know how. Here, I'll soon get one that'll show you!'

He advanced upon his grandmother, snatched her out of the donkey-chair, and, amid roars of applause, led her out, while the fiddle squealed its way through the inimitable twists of the tune, and the concertina surged and panted after it. Whatever Mrs. Knox may have thought of her grandson's behaviour, she was evidently going to make the best of it. She took her station opposite to him, in the purple bonnet, the dun-coloured shawl and the diamonds, she picked up her skirt at each side, affording a view of narrow feet in elastic-sided cloth boots, and for three repeats of the tune she stood up to her grandson, and footed it on the coach-house floor. What the cloth boots did I could not exactly follow; they were, as well as I could see, extremely scientific, while there was hardly so much as a nod from the plumes of the bonnet. Flurry was also scientific, but his dancing did not alter my opinion that he was drunk; in fact, I thought he was making rather an exhibition of himself. They say that that jig was twenty pounds in Mrs. Knox's pocket at the next rent day; but though this statement is open to doubt, I believe that if she and Flurry had taken the hat round there and then she would have got in the best part of her arrears.

After this the company settled down to business. The dances lasted a sweltering half-hour, old women and young dancing with equal and tireless zest. At the end of each the gentlemen abandoned their partners without ceremony or comment, and went out to smoke, while the ladies retired to the laundry, where families of teapots stewed on the long bars of the fire, and Mrs. Mahony cut up mighty 'barm-bracks,' and the tea-drinking was illimitable.

At ten o'clock Mrs. Knox withdrew from the revel; she said that she was tired, but I have seldom seen any one look more wide awake. I thought that I might unobtrusively follow her example, but I was intercepted by Flurry.

'Yeates,' he said seriously, 'I'll take it as a kindness if you'll



SHE STOOD UP TO HER GRANDSON, AND FOOTED IT ON THE COACH-HOUSE FLOOR

see this thing out with me. We must keep them pretty sober, and get them out of this by daylight. I—I have to get home early.'

I at once took back my opinion that Flurry was drunk; I almost wished he had been, as I could then have deserted him without a pang. As it was, I addressed myself heavily to the night's enjoyment. Wan with heat, but conscientiously cheerful, I danced with Miss Maggie Nolan, with the Castle Knox lady's maid, with my own kitchenmaid, who fell into wild giggles of terror whenever I spoke to her, with Mrs. Cadogan, who had apparently postponed the interesting feat of dancing to her grave, and did what she could to dance me into mine. I am bound to admit that though an ex-soldier and a major, and therefore equipped with a ready-made character for gallantry, Mrs. Cadogan was the only one of my partners with whom I conversed with any comfort.

At intervals I smoked cigarettes in the yard, seated on the old mounting-block by the gate, and overheard much conversation about the price of pigs in Skebawn; at intervals I plunged again into the coach-house, and led forth a perspiring wallflower into the scrimmage of a polka, or shuffled meaninglessly opposite to her in the long double line of dancers who were engaged with serious faces in executing a jig or a reel, I neither knew nor cared which. Flurry remained as undefeated as ever; I could only suppose it was his method of showing that his broken heart had mended.

'It's time to be making the punch, Masther Flurry,' said Denis, as the harness-room clock struck twelve. 'sure the night's warm, and the men's all gaping for it, the craytures!'

'What'll we make it in?' said Flurry, as we followed him into the laundry.

'The boiler, to be sure,' said Crusoe, taking up a stone of sugar, and preparing to shoot it into the laundry copper.

'Stop, you fool, it's full of cockroaches!' shouted Flurry, amid sympathetic squalls from the throng of countrywomen. 'Go get a bath!'

'Sure yerself knows there's but one bath in it,' retorted Denis, 'and that's within in the Major's room. Faith, the tinker got his own share yestherday with the same bath, sthriving to quinch the holes, and they as thick in it as the stars in the sky, and 'tis weeping still, afther all he done!'

'Well, then, here goes for the cockroaches!' said Flurry. 'What doesn't sicken will fatten! Give me the kettle, and come on, you Kitty Collins, and be skimming them off!'

There were no complaints of the punch when the brew was completed, and the dance thundered on with a heavier stamping and a louder hilarity than before. The night wore on; I squeezed through the unyielding pack of frieze coats and shawls in the doorway, and with feet that momently swelled in my pumps I limped over the cobble-stones to smoke my eighth cigarette on the mounting-block. It was a dark, hot night. The old castle loomed above me in piled-up roofs and gables, and high up in it somewhere a window sent a shaft of light into the sleeping leaves of a walnut-tree that overhung the gateway. At the bars of the gate two young horses peered in at the medley of noise and people; away in an outhouse a cock crew hoarsely. The gaiety in the coach-house increased momently, till, amid shrieks and bursts of laughter, Miss Maggie Nolan fled coquettishly from it with a long yell, like a train coming out of a tunnel, pursued by the fascinating Peter Cadogan brandishing a twig of mountain ash, in imitation of mistletoe. The young horses stampeded in horror, and immediately a voice proceeded from the lighted window above, Mrs. Knox's voice, demanding what the noise was, and announcing that if she heard any more of it she would have the place cleared.

An awful silence fell, to which the young horses' fleeing hoofs lent the final touch of consternation. Then I heard the irrepressible Maggie Nolan say: 'Oh God! Merry-come-sad!' which I take to be a reflection on the mutability of all earthly happiness.

Mrs. Knox remained for a moment at the window, and it struck me as remarkable that at 2.30 A.M. she should still have on her bonnet. I thought I heard her speak to some one in the room, and there followed a laugh, a laugh that was not a servant's, and was puzzlingly familiar. I gave it up, and presently dropped into a cheerless doze.

With the dawn there came a period when even Flurry showed signs of failing. He came and sat down beside me with a yawn; it struck me that there was more impatience and nervousness than fatigue in the yawn.

'I think I'll turn them all out of this after the next dance is over,' he said; 'I've a lot to do, and I can't stay here.'

I grunted in drowsy approval. It must have been a few minutes later that I felt Flurry grip my shoulder.

'Yeates!' he said, 'look up at the roof. Do you see anything up there by the kitchen chimney?'

He was pointing at a heavy stack of chimneys in a tower

that stood up against the grey and pink of the morning sky. At the angle where one of them joined the roof smoke was oozing busily out, and, as I stared, a little wisp of flame stole through.

The next thing that I distinctly remember is being in the van of a rush through the kitchen passages, every one shouting 'Water! Water!' and not knowing where to find it; then up several flights of the narrowest and darkest stairs it has ever been my fate to ascend, with a bucket of water that I snatched from a woman, spilling as I ran. At the top of the stairs came a ladder leading to a trap door, and up in the dark loft above was the roar and the wavering glare of flames.

'My God! That's sthrong fire!' shouted Denis, tumbling down the ladder with a brace of empty buckets; 'we'll never save it! The lake won't quinch it!'

The flames were squirting out through the bricks of the chimney, through the timbers, through the slates; it was barely possible to get through the trap door, and the booming and crackling strengthened every instant.

'A chain to the lake!' gasped Flurry, coughing in the stifling heat as he slashed the water at the blazing rafters; 'the well's no good! Go on, Yeates!'

The organising of a double chain out of the mob that thronged and shouted and jammed in the passages and yard was no mean feat of generalship; but it got done somehow. Mrs. Cadogan and Biddy Mahony rose magnificently to the occasion, cursing, thumping, shoving; and stable buckets, coal buckets, milk pails, and kettles were unearthed and sent swinging down the grass slope to the lake that lay in glittering unconcern in the morning sunshine. Men, women, and children worked in a way that only Irish people can work on an emergency. All their cleverness, all their good-heartedness, and all their love of a ruction came to the front; the screaming and the exhortations were incessant, but so were also the buckets that flew from hand to hand up to the loft. I hardly know how long we were at it, but there came a time when I looked up from the yard and saw that the billows of reddened smoke from the top of the tower were dying down, and I bethought me of old Mrs. Knox.

I found her at the door of her room, engaged in tying up a bundle of old clothes in a sheet; she looked as white as a corpse, but she was not in any way quelled by the situation.

'I'd be obliged to you all the same, Major Yeates, to throw this over the balusters,' she said, as I advanced with the news that the fire had been got under. ''Pon my honour, I don't know

when I've been as vexed as I've been this night, what with one thing and another! 'Tis a monstrous thing to use a guest as we've used you, but what could we do? I threw all the silver out of the dining-room window myself, and the poor peahen that had her nest there was hurt by an entrée dish, and half her eggs were——'

There was a curious sound not unlike a titter in Mrs. Knox's room.

'However, we can't make omelettes without breaking eggs—as they say—' she went on rather hurriedly; 'I declare I don't know what I'm saying! My old head is confused——'

Here Mrs. Knox went abruptly into her room and shut the door. Obviously there was nothing further to do for my hostess, and I fought my way up the dripping back staircase to the loft. The flames had ceased, the supply of buckets had been stopped, and Flurry, standing on a ponderous crossbeam, was poking his head and shoulders out into the sunlight through the hole that had been burned in the roof. Denis and others were pouring water over charred beams, the atmosphere was still stifling, everything was black, everything dripped with inky water. Flurry descended from his beam and stretched himself, looking like a drowned chimney-sweep.

'We've made a night of it, Yeates, haven't we?' he said, 'but we've bested it anyhow. We were done for only for you!' There was more emotion about him than the occasion seemed to warrant, and his eyes had a Christy Minstrel brightness, not wholly to be attributed to the dirt of his face. 'What's the time?—I must get home.'

The time, incredible as it seemed, was half-past six. I could almost have sworn that Flurry changed colour when I said so.

'I must be off,' he said; 'I had no idea it was so late.'

'Why, what's the hurry?' I asked.

He stared at me, laughed foolishly, and fell to giving directions to Denis. Five minutes afterwards he drove out of the yard and away at a canter down the long stretch of avenue that skirted the lake, with a troop of young horses flying on either hand. He whirled his whip round his head and shouted at them, and was lost to sight in a clump of trees. It is a vision of him that remains with me, and it always carries with it the bitter smell of wet charred wood.

Reaction had begun to set in among the volunteers. The chain took to sitting in the kitchen, cups of tea began mysteriously to circulate, and personal narratives of the fire were already

foreshadowing the amazing legends that have since gathered round the night's adventure. I left to Denis the task of clearing the house, and went up to change my wet clothes, with a feeling that I had not been to bed for a year. The ghost of a waiter who had drowned himself in a boghole would have presented a cheerier aspect than I, as I surveyed myself in the prehistoric mirror in my room, with the sunshine falling on my unshorn face and begrimed shirt-front.

I made my toilet at considerable length, and, it being now nearly eight o'clock, went downstairs to look for something to eat. I had left the house humming with people; I found it silent as Pompeii. The sheeted bundles containing Mrs. Knox's wardrobe were lying about the hall; a couple of ancestors who in the first alarm had been dragged from the walls were leaning drunkenly against the bundles; last night's dessert was still on the dining-room table. I went out on to the hall door steps, and saw the entrée-dishes in a glittering heap in a nasturtium bed, and realised that there was no breakfast for me this side of lunch at Shreelane.

There was a sound of wheels on the avenue, and a brougham came into view, driving fast up the long open stretch by the lake. It was the Castle Knox brougham, driven by Norris, whom I had last seen drunk at the athletic sports, and as it drew up at the door I saw Lady Knox inside.

'It's all right, the fire's out,' I said, advancing genially and full of reassurance.

'What fire?' said Lady Knox, regarding me with an iron countenance.

I explained.

'Well, as the house isn't burned down,' said Lady Knox, cutting short my details, 'perhaps you would kindly find out if I could see Mrs. Knox.'

Lady Knox's face was many shades redder than usual. I began to understand that something awful had happened, or would happen, and I wished myself safe at Shreelane, with the bedclothes over my head.

'If 'tis for the misthress you're looking, me lady,' said Denis's voice behind me, in tones of the utmost respect, 'she went out to the kitchen garden awhile ago to get a blasht o' the fresh air afther the night. Maybe your ladyship would sit inside in the library till I call her?'

Lady Knox eyed Crusoe suspiciously.

'Thank you, I'll fetch her myself,' she said.

'Oh, sure, that's too throuble——' began Denis.

'Stay where you are!' said Lady Knox, in a voice like the slam of a door.

'Bedad, I'm best plased she went,' whispered Denis, as Lady Knox set forth alone down the shrubbery walk.

'But *is* Mrs. Knox in the garden?' said I.

'The Lord preserve your innocence, sir!' replied Denis, with seeming irrelevance.

At this moment I became aware of the incredible fact that Sally Knox was silently descending the stairs; she stopped short as she got into the hall, and looked almost wildly at me and Denis. Was I looking at her wraith? There was again a sound of wheels on the gravel; she went to the hall door, outside which was now drawn up Mrs. Knox's donkey-carriage, as well as Lady Knox's brougham, and, as if overcome by this imposing spectacle, she turned back and put her hands over her face.

'She's gone round to the garden, asthore,' said Denis in a hoarse whisper; 'go in the donkey-carriage. 'Twill be all right!' He seized her by the arm, pushed her down the steps and into the little carriage, pulled up the hood over her to its furthest stretch, snatched the whip out of the hand of the broadly grinning Norris, and with terrific objurgations lashed the donkey into a gallop. The donkey-boy grasped the position, whatever it might be; he took up the running on the other side, and the donkey-carriage swung away down the avenue, with all its incongruous air of hooded and rowdy invalidism.

I have never disguised the fact that I am a coward, and therefore when, at this dynamitical moment, I caught a glimpse of Lady Knox's hat over a laurestinus, as she returned at high speed from the garden, I slunk into the house and faded away round the dining-room door.

'This minute I seen the misthress going down through the plantation beyond,' said Crusoe outside the window, 'and I'm afther sending Johnny Regan to her with the little carriage, not to put any more delay on yer ladyship. Sure you can see him making all the haste he can. Maybe you'd sit inside in the library till she comes.'

Silence followed. I peered cautiously round the window curtain. Lady Knox was looking defiantly at the donkey-carriage as it reeled at top speed into the shades of the plantation, strenuously pursued by the woolly dog. Norris was regarding his horses' ears in expressionless respectability. Denis began to pick up the entrée-dishes with decorous solicitude. Lady Knox turned

THE DONKEY-CARRIAGE SWUNG AWAY DOWN THE AVENUE

and came into the house; she passed the dining-room door with an ominous step, and went on into the library.

It seemed to me that now or never was the moment to retire quietly to my room, put my things into my portmanteau, and——

Denis rushed into the room with the entrée-dishes piled up to his chin.

'She's diddled!' he whispered, crashing them down on the table. He came at me with his hand out. 'Three cheers for Masther Flurry and Miss Sally,' he hissed, wringing my hand up and down, 'and 'twas yerself called for "Haste to the Weddin'"

EVEN FOUND RICE AND THREW IT

last night, long life to ye! The Lord save us! There's the misthress going into the library!'

Through the half-open door I saw old Mrs. Knox approach the library from the staircase with a dignified slowness; she had on a wedding garment, a long white bernouse, in which she might easily have been mistaken for a small, stout clergyman. She waved back Crusoe, the door closed upon her, and the battle of giants was entered upon. I sat down—it was all I was able for—and remained for a full minute in stupefied contemplation of the entrée-dishes.

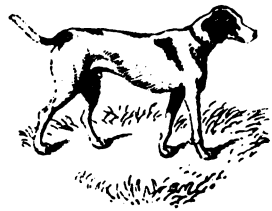
Perhaps of all conclusions to a situation so portentous, that which occurred was the least possible. Twenty minutes after

Mrs. Knox met her antagonist I was summoned from my room to face the appalling duty of escorting the combatants, in Lady Knox's brougham, to the church outside the back gate, to which Miss Sally had preceded them in the donkey-carriage, and found that the millennium had suddenly set in. It apparently dawned with the news that Aussolas and all things therein were bequeathed to Flurry by his grandmother, and had established itself finally upon the considerations that the marriage was past praying for, and that the diamonds were intended for Miss Sally.

We fetched the bride and bridegroom from the church; we fetched old Eustace Hamilton, who married them; we dug out the champagne from the cellar; we even found rice and threw it.

The hired carriage that had been ordered to take the runaways across country to a distant station was driven by Slipper. He was shaved; he wore an old livery coat and a new pot hat; he was wondrous sober. On the following morning he was found asleep on a heap of stones ten miles away; somewhere in the neighbourhood one of the horses was grazing in a field with a certain amount of harness hanging about it. The carriage and the remaining horse were discovered in a roadside ditch, two miles further on; one of the carriage doors had been torn off, and inside it the hens of the vicinity were conducting an exhaustive search after the rice that lurked in the cushions.

FINIS



NOTES

BY 'RAPIER'

FEW cricketers have failed by this time to read 'W. G.,' the 'Cricket Reminiscences and Personal Recollections' of the famous player who is generally known by those initials. The sub-title, by the way, is rather clumsy, because a 'reminiscence' and a 'recollection' are so very nearly alike that it was surely unnecessary to mention both; but that is a matter of detail. The book is, of course, full of interesting things; and I regret that the brief space into which I have to squeeze my Notes this month prevents me from commenting on the numerous things that struck me when I read it. It seems odd now to think of the captain of a team saying that he did not want W G. Grace to play. It was natural enough at the time, however, that having been thirty-five years ago, and it is gratifying to read that in the match in question the almost rejected player, who was only admitted because his brother insisted on it, made 170 in his first innings and 56 not out in the second. Cricket reminiscences linger long, and are sweet or bitter, as the case may be, for it seems that Mr. W. Napper is still exercised in his mind, because

he thinks that Point ought to have taken the chance which Grace gave in this match, A.D. 1864, after he had hit the bowler (Mr. W. Napper) three times to the boundary off successive balls. The ball in question went to the boundary after its three predecessors. Mr. Napper thinks Point ought to have secured it on the way.

A companion proverb to 'More haste less speed' might be devised, something to the effect of 'More care less success.' One of Dr. Grace's recollections—or reminiscences, if he prefers it—is with regard to a match at Canterbury in 1876, M.C.C. against Kent. The game seemed lost on the Friday afternoon, when the M.C.C. went in again with their follow-on innings, and Dr. Grace determined to hit out, not very much concerned whether he lost his wicket or not, for it seemed impossible to save the game, and if he were disposed of he would be able to travel down to Gloucester next day instead of on the Sunday. He went in, in forty-five minutes had knocked together 100 runs, and when stumps were drawn had contributed 133 to the M.C.C. total of 217. Next morning the score was increased in ninety minutes to 323; by 5 o'clock in the evening he had made 344 of the M.C.C. total of 557 for 8 wickets. That is the sort of cricket which rejoices the spectator's heart when he has grown thoroughly tired of admirably correct, but exceedingly tedious, defence. But 1876 was one of Grace's great years, and he records how in five successive innings he made 1,008 runs.

One would like to know the precise figures of the longest hit ever made. One of the highest must surely have been in a certain match, when Dr. E. M. Grace and Col. Fred Campbell were together at the wicket, playing for the Gentlemen of the South against the All England Eleven. The former famous batsman hit at a fast ball which caught the edge of his bat, and soared into the air so far up, that before it reached the hands of the wicket-keeper (who failed to hold it) they were just finishing their third run! That must have been a rocketer, indeed! Dr. Grace declares that he has seen two runs while the ball was in the air, and before a catch was made, but he does not absolutely warrant the story of this third run. As for defence, that is a good anecdote of R. G. Barlow, the Lancashire cricketer, who

was originally a railway porter. A gentleman, stranded at the station where Barlow was employed, asked the station-master what he could do whilst waiting for his train, and was invited to join in a game of cricket. 'Come and have a bowl at our porter,' the official said; 'he has been batting for six weeks, and we cannot get him out!' Barlow, too, seems to have been what used to be called something of a 'wag,' and was accustomed to tell a tale of a man who went into the shop which he set up in Manchester, and having asked and been assured that Barlow had every possible sort of cricket requisite, said to him: 'Then let me have a bottle of arnica, threepennyworth of court-plaster, two yards of bandaging-lint, and an arm-sling. I am playing in a cricket-match against Jack Crossland.'

Many of these stories will doubtless have been so frequently quoted before my Notes appear that I must not prolong them, in case they should be stale, but one or two of the records may well be set down in these pages. I suppose that Mr. C. I. Thornton's innings of 107 for the Gentlemen of England *v.* I Zingari, at Scarborough, is about a record in its way, for it was made in exactly twenty-nine strokes; and the bowler most punished was Mr. A. G. Steel. As for bowling records, two are specially worth mentioning: one was made by Mr. G. Strachan:

Overs 8·3, maidens 8, runs 0, wickets 5;

the other was by Pougher:

Overs 3, maidens 3, runs 0, wickets 5.

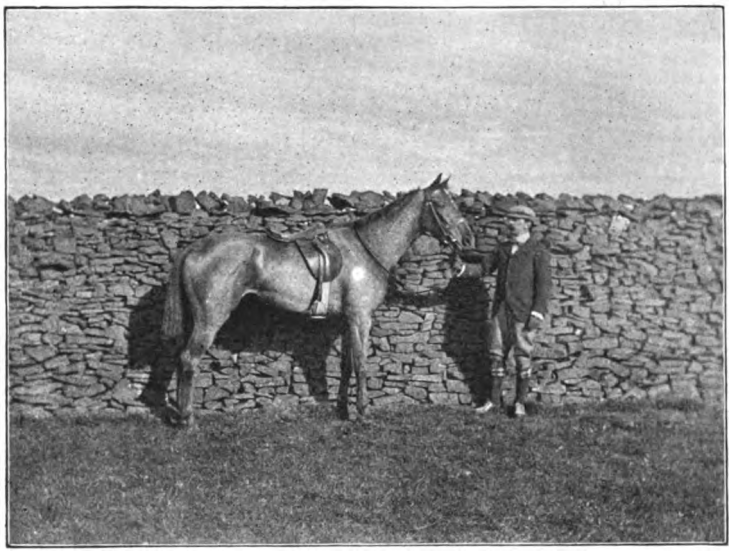
For several years past there have been at intervals rumours of a good two-year-old coming from Kingsclere, and not seldom these rumours have proved to be correct. Last month I hazarded the suggestion that Democrat and Longy were the best two-year-olds that had been sent out so far. Goodwood, however, introduced us to Simon Dale, and we shall see in the course of a few weeks—at Doncaster on the 5th of this month—whether Simon Dale or Democrat is the better of the pair; for I imagine that the Champagne Stakes will go to one of these, unless, indeed, the Duke of Westminster has something better than his stable

companion. It is a long time since the Duke of Portland owned a good horse, after, for so many seasons, having such a number of good ones, and it is odd how these things come round in turn. Almost invariably after an owner has for a certain time gone far to carrying all before him the period is reached when he is unable to win a race of any kind.

The St. Leger will be close at hand when these Notes appear, and, if all goes well, I suppose we shall see a fight between Flying Fox and Caiman. That the former is an exceptionally speedy colt there can be, of course, no doubt. My own idea is that he is quite as good as his sire Orme, though a good deal inferior to his grandsire Ormonde; but, of course, the question remains whether he can stay. His ardent partisans grow extremely angry if any one hints at any doubt on the subject; nevertheless, the fact remains that his only slovenly performance this year was in the Derby, when he had to gallop a mile and a half. It is odd that this should be so, no doubt, considering the weakness of the opposition, especially when Holocauste had dropped out, and various excuses are made for Flying Fox. It is really not the least good arguing as to what he might have done had Holocauste continued galloping by his side (which, in my own opinion, the French colt was incapable of doing any longer when he dropped out before breaking down), or whether Mornington Cannon grew flustered at winning his first Derby, and so set to work on the colt in an unnecessary way. We shall very soon now see whether Flying Fox stays or not. Caiman, I believe, does stay, because I chance to know that at Goodwood Huggins thought it extremely probable that Harrow would wait on the American-bred horse, and beat him for speed at the finish. The inference I drew from this was that in his trainer's opinion (and he is certainly a particularly admirable judge) Caiman is a stayer, and wants a longer distance than a mile to show what he can really do. That, indeed, seems the only possible explanation of Huggins's anxiety. However, as I had just remarked, we shall soon see.

This picture will at first sight create no impression as regards the subject it represents, but, when it is explained, may possibly awaken an impression of incredulity. The facts are none the

less certain, and can be testified to abundantly. This little mare, at the end of a long hunting run, jumped the wall, which, as may be seen, rises considerably above her back. A friend of mine was on her at the time, but he modestly seeks to hide his name, and, indeed, wanted me to have his face obliterated; but



I do not suppose he will be very generally recognised, and it seemed a pity to spoil an interesting picture. That he is a good man over a country is a fact which the photograph may, I think, be held amply to prove. The mare has, I believe, since been sold at Tattersall's. I do not know who bought her, but if she and her owner are pounded we may shrewdly suspect that it is not her fault.

Grouse shooting began a few hours before the time when I am forced to write, and accounts of sport are curiously contradictory. In some places bags are stated to be much bigger than a sanguine estimate reckoned; in other places birds are described as scarce and wild. Do grouse grow harder of approach year by year? That is a question about which I find the best authorities differ. Partridges, I am convinced, are shier and warier than when I first shot them, but artificial and scientific farming affects them, and as a very general rule the surroundings of the grouse

are wilder and infinitely less influenced by modern methods. Local conditions have so much to do with sport that they explain, in a great measure, why results vary to such a notable extent. The past weather; disease in some places, clean bills of health in others; the state of the land; judicious or injudicious keepering; the supply of birds left last year—whether the estate has been under or over shot—these are all important details on which a vast deal depends.

Then, again, a shoot, when it comes to shooting, may be well or ill arranged. Even in the former case the element of luck has much to do with bags; sometimes birds come right, at other times they come all wrong, or rather do not come at all; and, furthermore, when totals are summed up for the first few days, there is the question as to who were shooting and how they shot? Good luck, sound judgment, and guns held straight lead to unexpectedly favourable totals on moors from which little was hoped; bad luck, clumsy arrangements and poor shooting disappoint reasonable anticipation on ground where birds are plentiful. All these things go far to explain why records from various places early in the season exceed or fall short of promise. As for partridges, in some counties it is said that birds swarm; in others, I hear the unwelcome story of pater- and materfamilias without the family, and that is always depressing.

THE
BADMINTON MAGAZINE
October 1899

THE PRINCESS—A RECOLLECTION

BY W. B. MAXWELL

I DO not say that no man is worth consideration who does not live on his own fifty acres of meadow and cabbage garden, and who cannot fairly and clearly trace his pedigree back to a grandfather sitting on the same county bench as that which he himself adorns; but I do say, most emphatically, that there is a certain polish of thought and expression, an inner grace of mind and manner, only to be acquired by living in the same village, hunting with the same hounds, and consorting with the same people for the term of your natural life, which we, who are unhappily forced to move about the world, now here and now there, and never able to be fixed for twenty years at a stretch, must admire if we cannot hope to emulate. And this slowly matured charm was possessed in full measure by the gentlemen followers of the North-East Mudshire Hounds.

If I say that the country is bounded on the east by that sea-coast on which stands the flourishing town of Whitmouth, and that the extreme north-west corner, running out like the spout of a teapot, cuts into another country, which, famous itself, 'marches' with perhaps the most famous country in the shires, I shall have sufficiently indicated its situation and its respectability. When, with regard to half a dozen of your meets, you can truthfully speak of the danger of clashing with the ——,

no man need be ashamed of hunting with you, or, what is more to the purpose, take shame in saying he has done so.

I think the North-East Mudshire quite understood this, because, from their conversation, that peril of clashing appeared to be the ever-present dread of their lives. The average muster at a North-East Mudshire popular appointment was, say, 125 to 150; while, at meets within easy reach of Whitmouth, the number of horse people frequently touched 200, and the crowd on wheels, including those of public coaches and *char-à-bancs*, was, according to the local papers, 'phenomenal,' 'colossal,' 'inconceivable,' and—'big.' But it was only when 'the *élite* of our fashionable watering-place' might be expected to show in any force, that the 'Whitmouth Times and Courier' sent forth its reporter on the office bike to chronicle the sporting tale. Naturally nobody cared what the 'Courier' thought or said about the pursuit, into what gross spew-holes of error the reporter fell, what a quagmire of nonsense the printer afterwards made of his notes. Certainly not. If you really want to know what happens and how things are done in North-East Mudshire, read 'Sandwich-Case' in the 'Field,' any week you like, for that able historian is a regular follower. I suppose few critics—I mean your real, literary, paid, quarterly review critics—would venture to say that 'Sandwich-Case' cannot *write* to hounds, whatever may be hinted about his riding. While for drawing up an accurate, comprehensive, properly spelt list of names of those present when the fox is found, 'Sandwich-Case' is generally admitted to be a master of his craft.

And to enable a stranger to obtain a just notion of the class of country, the style of the hunt, the sort of sport one may hope for, what can be more important than this work of 'Sandwich-Case'—a really reliable list of names?

Names never deceive. Show me the *dramatis personæ*, and I will tell you your drama. Give me the names in the lobbies, and I will declare the origin of all this cross-voting. Say who was there, and I will almost guess what you had for dinner. Unflinching, unbending, not to be glozed over or smoothed away, the names speak the plain unvarnished truth; and, when once you have learnt to read them, nothing else is worth considering. 'One of the most brilliant gatherings of the season,' says the 'Daily Female.' 'All fashionable London seemed crowded into Mrs. Von Rotter's reception rooms.' Well! go on reading. I wait. 'Noticeable among the throng were Mrs. Fudge, Lady Foodle, Major-General Bunkom,' &c. &c. Pooh! The empty

fraud is betrayed in an instant by that miserable trio of names.

But if, in social matters, names are pregnant with meaning, in the world of sport they are infinitely bigger in import. Quite apart from the men and women they represent, the names themselves have such a character and individuality that, seen for the first time, it is difficult not to at once realise their weight and their value. This is not easy to explain, but it is a fact which undoubtedly exists. It is some subtle connexion between the fitness of things for the use to which they are by chance put; some unexplained link between the first sound of things and the ultimate sense of things, which we intuitively feel but about which we cannot reason.

As the commonest example, I will take the sport of pigeon-shooting. Why is it that to successfully shoot pigeons out of traps, a double-barrelled name is almost as essential as a double-barrelled gun? Absurd! And yet who will deny it? Who will not, instinctively, expect a Mr. Grasser-Grasser or a Captain Purdey-Stock to account for more consecutive birds than a mere Mr. Plugg?

As to the chase: we all know that colonels—a lot of colonels—indicate heavy going, that majors mean mud (this may be only an association of ideas). But who can explain why admirals go with stone walls, while, oddly enough, generals are found in most profusion on light dry soils and good galloping grass lands? Can any old hunting man throw doubt on this? Then in the matter of smartness. Show me the list. Peers of the realm, up to and including dukes, astounding as it may appear, count for nothing. They hunt on or about their own land. But the courtesy titles—Lords Adolphus and Loftus and so forth—mean flying. With no load of duties to weigh them down, no handicap of fortune to stop them, they are free to go the pace in all departments of life, and, indeed, are proverbially known for going it. And, above all, strange and outlandish names mark the very cream of the sport. When your list contains such names as Count Bowowowski, Baron St. Barbe de Wire, Mr. G. Washington Thruster, Mr. Melton Moses, &c. &c., you have touched the high-water mark of fashion and fox-hunting. For these are the distinguished travellers who have come all the way from Vienna, Brussels, Boston, Jerusalem to see the fun, and you may be sure that, after such journeys, only the best is good enough for them.

Well, with *us* (I had the honour to be a member of the North-

East Mudshire Hunt Club for two years) we had a fair sprinkling of generals and one Lord Augustus, but it must be confessed that we never had a foreigner amongst us till the day that the Princess came out.

It was our genial, wheezing, fat-faced Horton who brought the news over from Whitmouth. He had read it in the 'Whitmouth Courier.' She was coming out next week. Charley Gorsebrake, Reggie Firwood, and Captain Whistler—certainly our three most accomplished performers—who were helping each other to light their cigarettes, turned round and denied it flatly. Was it likely? Or, supposing that the Princess had any intention of coming, would not Lord Whitmouth have been informed? Or, if the thing was to leak out through the press, would not 'Sandwich-Case' have got wind of it before that wretched rag the 'Courier'?

My Lord of Whitmouth, heavy, middle-aged, but most noble in appearance, riding up at the moment, was appealed to. 'Sandwich-Case,' light and quick of eye, joining the group, was questioned. Neither had heard anything about it.

'She was out three days with the Quorn last week,' said the historian. 'And went great guns,' Whissendine says. 'But according to yesterday's "Morning Post" she's indisposed.'

'P'r'aps she's coming 'ere for 'er 'ealth,' cried Mr. Horton, eagerly, and Lord Whitmouth shivered, while the literary gentleman smiled in a pitying manner.

It is an extraordinary thing nowadays to find a man of decent means and decent up-bringing persistently going short with his aspirates, but this was unhappily the case with poor Mr. Horton.

We were not proud of him. Indeed, to say truth, he was the only subscriber and follower of whom we were heartily ashamed. He was a heavy man of about thirty-five, with a fat, smiling face, queer little bright eyes, and a very small nose, which was not absolutely straight, and from beneath which there projected a stubby roll of sandy moustache. The grossness of this moustache further diminished his insignificant nose, rendering it lamentably inadequate for the broad full face. He was a great sufferer from asthma, but pursued with tremendous vigour, and as, when the view holloa and the answering horn announced that the game was on foot, he had not sufficient breath to sound the H in front of his own name, it was really wonderful how he contrived to live through a good thing without suffocation.

I think he was the worse-dressed man that ever threw his leg across a saddle and rode forth to meet a strange pack of hounds. So when he appeared one day at the head of the sea-side contingent in a shocking old red coat, his piqué tie with the huge intaglio of a fox's mask riding under his left ear, his cord breeches rucking out of his concertina'd top-boots, and seven great pearl buttons showing on one side and six on the other, it is not surprising that he was condemned on sight, and for weeks afterwards severely left alone. It was not that he possessed none of that charm to which allusion has been made, for that was only to be expected. He really seemed impossible, and not to be tolerated even by modest visitors on probation, like myself, and how much more intolerable must he have seemed to the real native-born gentry! But the curious thing was that the man appeared to be totally unconscious of the crushing treatment which he was receiving. Had he ridden apart and in silence for a year or two —content to play a waiting game, as Firwood aptly said—he might have slowly won his way through the barriers very naturally and properly erected against him, and to him one day, as to the poor Snob of the fable, somebody might have said, 'Perhaps, sir, you would like to dine with me,' and victory, after an uphill fight, would have been his.

But no, instead of waiting he actually asked *us* to dine with *him* over at the club at Whitmouth, and fatuously promised us a good dinner if we came. This, and the fact that he called people by their names, no Mister or Captain, but just the name as soon as he picked it up—as 'I say, Gorsebrake,' 'Mornin', Firwood,' and so on—first made it clear that, whatever we might think, he supposed himself to be a gentleman, and in a manner the social equal of the whole field. This mental attitude seemed ludicrous, but yet must have some basis or reason, so we set ourselves to make inquiries, and finally discovered that so far as being the son of decent folk (I think his father was an artillery colonel), and having a fair competence to support existence, the fellow really had some claim to back his pretensions. It made no difference to the native-born, strong in the feeling of two generations behind them, but it saved one from flushing or grasping one's crop near the handle when he suddenly addressed one without the prefix of ceremony. It need hardly be said that we did not go and dine to play bridge (of which game he was always talking), to meet the parson and the doctor, and, for all we knew, the auctioneer as well.

He had been with us two years now, and was a familiar

figure, only necessary to be explained away when strangers visited us. Everybody else knew all about him—that he subscribed handsomely, that the two blundering bays were his own, and that for the rest he relied on Bishop, the well-known Whitmouth jobmaster. We all believed, or pretended to believe, that he summered his private cattle in the bathing machines on Whitmouth sands, and he was now universally known as 'the Claimant,' which nickname he had earned by his own pronunciation of his name.

'You may take it or leave it,' said Mr. Horton, laughing. 'But it's a fact, and I'll tell you for why.'

'For why!' The literary gentleman contorted his face as though taken with a twinge of toothache. My lord dimly felt that the turn of speech was inelegant—too colloquial; but the barbarism flew over the heads of the other gentlemen like a wild bird, unheeded or out of their range.

'I'll tell you for why. Parker—you know—of the Bank, was playing pills with Brown, the manager of the Grand, and he told him straight he'd let 'is 'ole first floor to 'er and 'er people.'

'Well, I have heard nothing, so far,' said Lord Whitmouth, modestly. It seemed hardly probable that royalty would visit his territory without apprising him of its coming.

'They say she's a very good-looking woman—for a princess,' said Captain Whistler, puffing his cigarette languidly.

'Aren't they all princesses on the Continent—or grand duchesses?' asked Mr. Horton—but this time he had blundered badly.

'Now of all the silly, ignorant superstitions,' said Major Gaddesden, severely, 'and the one that dies hardest—it is that insular and preposterous notion.'

Major Gaddesden had joined in unobserved, and he was full of this unfounded rumour about the Princess Aurelia. The Major was known to have a library of peerages and kindred works, and to have taken praiseworthy trouble in mastering their contents. When a man is himself the cousin of a peer and his wife's family contains two baronets, he must be mean-spirited indeed if he shirks the study of the orders with which he is connected, or belittles the importance of the honours borne by those to whom he is by birth akin.

Well, we knew old Gaddesden 'could spike any paper on Debrett that ever was set,' but we did not know that, in a healthy thirst for still more knowledge, he had not long since adorned his shelves with an 'Almanach de Gotha.'

He gave it us now—*première partie, branche regnante, ligne directe*, &c.—with a masterly exposition of his studies which ought to have made 'the Claimant' reel from his saddle in shame.

Addressing his lordship, but talking at Mr. Horton, he sketched the splendours of that royal house and quoted his authority twenty times in a minute. His 'Gotha' told him what every child who remembered his history should know, that they had swayed their heavy sceptre over half the known world. That they had been emperors of emperors, holding courts of kings, and only admitting the ruck of reigning princes to an outer feasting—a sort of tenants' ball of minor potentates. The wonder and pomp of it all had slipped from them, century by century, but still, think, only think, of what they hold to this day. And as to this lady—the Princess Aurelia, Amelia, Aspasia, &c. &c., in the direct line—royal and imperial—closely related to our own Royal Family—with a husband standing three from a throne, &c. &c. &c.

'Oh dear! Is she married?' asked Mr. Horton, with ill-judged levity. 'Then we 'aven't a chance, any of us.'

'She is married to a Grand Duke—I forget the name for the moment.'

'Then why is she called Princess, instead of Grand Duchess?' asked Mr. Horton, unabashed. 'Don't Goethe explain that?'

'Well, she was born an *Arch*-Duchess.'

'Then why isn't she called arch? But that don't sound respectful.'

'She is currently spoken of as the Princess Aurelia,' said Gaddesden solemnly, 'instead of being indicated by any higher title, because—well, because, being of the "Imperial family," and in the direct line, she is, so to speak, one of *the* princesses of the er—er—reigning house.'

'You've put it in a nutshell,' said Horton, laughing; and the Major pulled his old grey horse round and away, with an irritated jerk of the rein.

'But—'ere—I say, Gaddesden, you haven't told us if she is ever goin' to be emperor. Has the St. Gothard Calendar left that bit out?'

And Mr. Horton laughed and caught his breath in laughing, and began to cough and wheeze in the clutch of an asthmatic spasm. The Whitmouth people—members of that awful club

where the Claimant played his snooker and his bridge, the parson, the auctioneer and the doctor—always said that, but for this chronic asthma, he could have sounded his aspirates as clearly and as well as you or I. But Major Gaddesden said, 'No, sir, it is not asthma. It is innate vulgarity.'

She was out. The Princess had come, like a bolt from the blue—without beat of drum or sound of clarion, or even a note of warning to Lord Whitmouth, she was among us. According to the newspaper she had been here, there, and everywhere during the last few days. She had found the climate too severe and hurried back to Paris; she had contracted a chill while hunting with the Belvoir and had been lent Osborne as a mild place to recover in; she had been shopping in London *incognito*, as the papers will have it, and had spent one whole afternoon in Bond Street and Piccadilly without being recognised; she had certainly been to Windsor to dine and sleep; her own physician, Herr Grübenschtickler, had been seen at Brighton, Torquay and Whitmouth, testing the quality of the air with a most delicate and elaborate instrument of his own invention, and for which he had been given the black and the blue, and the purple eagle decoration. But now she was on Holborough Common, on a brown horse, at some distance from the hounds and surrounded, at a respectful distance, by such a crowd as no meet of the N.-E. M. had ever yet produced.

There had been no time to consult her convenience as to the place of meeting. Holborough old gate, on the common, nine miles out from Whitmouth, had been duly advertised, and neither the Master nor anybody else knew that she had really arrived at the Grand till the night before. Looking round at the throng gathered together in the bright sunlight of the February morning, it occurred to everybody that it was lucky a fine open space had been selected and no narrow site nearer the town, or danger to life and limb might have ensued. Whitmouth had evidently suspended business for the day, every hunter from the stables of 'our fellow-townsman,' Bishop, was out; the four-horse *char-à-bancs* and wagonettes had been brought forth out of season and were all well loaded; while from every Bell and George and Dragon of the hinterland there came rumbling the broughams and barouches of hired ceremony.

And the gentlemen followers of the N.-E. M.? Well, we did our best. There was no stint of new hats and fresh scarlet, of orchid button-hole or doeskin gloves. Taken unawares, we

SHE WAS OUT. THE PRINCESS HAD COME

did all that was possible in the time. With Lord Whitmouth it was a case of *noblesse oblige*. By nature quite unostentatious, he was not, strictly speaking, a two-horse man at all. But when we saw him coming down the road on his coach, the wheelers showing bold and fair between the straggling leaders, till the whole thing looked like a noble four abreast, we felt that he was indeed making an effort, and were prepared for the three mounted grooms and the two behind the coach. Nobody till that day believed that Whitmouth *could* drive four-in-hand, or that he possessed *five* of those old orange and blue liveries, with boots and men to match.

'She has two counts with her,' people were saying. 'Both the men with moustaches are counts. The one with the tuft on his chin is the Queen's equerry, lent her while she stays in England.'

'Oh yes, to be sure,' said Lord Whitmouth. 'Sir Arthur Chough! The one with the tuft, yes, yes,' and he hoisted himself on to his horse, while the heaviest of his orange and blue attendants hung with all his weight on the off-side stirrup-leather.

As I have said, there was a wide circle about her, a circle described by respect and guarded by good manners. There were no police. And, in the middle of the circle, she sat on her splendid brown horse talking to the hawk-nosed, moustachioed counts, with Sir Arthur, the English equerry, and several black-coated grooms and led horses all about her. Grooms and noblemen were sober and severe as to garb. It was only the number that made it 'look like a circus,' as Horton remarked. Of course the Claimant must come out in the worst of those terrible red coats, stained and faded to an incredible purple by the sea air creeping into his chest of drawers, rather than by field service. For the honour of the country he really might have stayed away. His absence would have been more valuable than the presence of his lordship's coach.

Well, all eyes, in the moments of wandering from *her* were on Whitmouth, as the most locally important of the many locally important people present. As though drawn by an invisible string he very soon began to sidle and twist into the charmed circle; and it seemed almost that the horse and not the rider was forcing his way towards the august little group. Then it seemed that Sir Arthur suddenly rode out as though to stop him, as might a mounted policeman. Words were exchanged and we held our breath; and then, what everybody had been expecting--

naturally and very properly counting on—happened. Lord Whitmouth was presented to the Princess.

She bowed gravely, made a remark, then smiled, and as she smiled, she showed some small and beautifully white and 'regular' teeth; and then, almost immediately, with an inclination of the head, she half turned and went on talking to the counts.

Sir Arthur closed in very like a policeman, and his lordship drew back, pulling hard at his horse and backing away slowly and heavily. To all the world it seemed that Lord Whitmouth was surprised by and unprepared for the shortness of the audience and the abruptness of the dismissal. Somehow it was felt that a man of his rank might, if one may so express it, have almost hob-nobbed with her for a bit, and that she *could* not know what and who he was; but with this natural feeling of disappointment, there was the sense that his lordship himself had been somehow wanting in dignity and lacking in ease of deportment. For a man who has the *entrée* of the Court of St. James's and who constantly avails himself of it (for you can't read of a Levee without seeing Whitmouth's name), the sidling and the backing and the bowing had been overdone. As a courtier and welcomer of princesses his lordship had failed. That was the prevailing feeling, and it found expression on all sides in the most ridiculous and fanciful fashion.

'I tell you there's a wider difference in rank between him and her than there is between me and that coachman. She thinks herself as much above him as you do above a railway guard!'

There was a crowded *char-à-banc* immediately behind me and I heard the animated conversation of the passengers—high up, like the voices of an aerial chorus. That was the sort of thing, but I did not listen attentively, I was too much interested by what the equerry was saying to Lord Whitmouth.

'Then if *you* are not, who *is* the Master? I thought you were the Master of the Hounds,' Sir Arthur Chough was saying, rather testily. 'Yes, by all means. If you'll be so kind as to bring him over.'

Now our worthy Master, although he and his ancestors had ever been of immense local importance, was one of the least assuming of men. He was a tall young bachelor of forty with a very red complexion, and hair and moustache of so light a flaxen as at times to look like cotton-wool, and he had, I know, been quaking in his long boots and glancing apprehensively over his shoulders in heavy dread of the honour almost certainly in

store for him. Yet, if ever there was a man full and running over with the peculiar local charm, it was he.

There was no undue cringing and bowing from the Master as Lord Whitmouth brought him across and gave him in charge of the mounted policeman.

'An English country gentleman needn't be afraid of nobody, no matter how high they are,' cried a voice in the air, changing the tune for the whole chorus.

He sat square and straight on his horse, and lifted his velvet cap just sufficiently to show a small bald patch in the sunlight, while Sir Arthur rattled through the ceremony. *She* made the same slight inclination of the head, said something, and then our straining eyes caught the glitter of the little white teeth as she smiled pleasantly.

'We'll draw the bog first,' said the Master to the Princess, in his fine open-air voice, pointing with his whip to the distant slope of the hill; 'we ought to find one there.'

And then he wheeled his horse outward, giving *her* the fullest measure of back view possible, and jogged back to his hounds to start the business of the day.

Everybody knows what happens on these occasions when all nerves are strained to show sport for the distinguished strangers. Well, it happened to-day in the most extraordinary way. There was nothing in the bog but water, nothing in the big wood beyond but mud, nothing in the isolated spinnies beyond the wood but sharp stubs and well-pegged rabbit wire.

If we could only have found we should have thought less of the Princess, and we should all have been happier. As it was there seemed nothing else to think about. She and her party—and that was the same thing—filled the landscape, made the air heavy and dulled the light of the good sun. We tried to give her room—room to exercise half her imperial cavalry. We rode wide—wide enough for the march of the imperial army. We hung back and forged ahead; but, at every moment, one blundered against her, got caught in a lane with her, jammed up to her horse's tail in a block at a gate, or nearly cannoned her galloping free at a cross ride when one thought she was safely left a mile away. And, at such moments, one always caught her eye. She might be talking earnestly to one of the counts, but she instantly paused, as though moved by some mysterious royal instinct which whispered to her, 'Somebody has got too close to me.' Then she gave one a royal and imperial stare—in

which was inquiry, indifference, and yet profound study. One looked in another direction of course. Naturally, good manners forbad a return glance. One looked all round the horizon while the miserable block at the gate lasted, and not until everybody was free five minutes later did one steal a rapid, furtive peep round, and then, merciful powers! one caught her eye again. It was inexplicable, most uncomfortable; but I have since been informed that this is a peculiar property of princes. Like really fine portraits painted by great masters—their eyes always seem to be full upon you, no matter where you stand.

There was not the smallest doubt that this was a real princess, nor was Gaddesden any more needed to bring the matter home to our dull minds with 'Gotha.' All the *première partie* sounded in the strange language in which she spoke to the counts; behind her dark grey habit and her fine brown horse there seemed to flash and wheel imperial squadrons, saluting her as their chief. From the moment that she arrived at the meet one felt that she was strangely, essentially, overpoweringly royal. One knew that if Brown of the Grand had *tested* her last night, piled mattress upon mattress above the offending pea, there would have been such a ringing of bells, such a guttural roaring of her chamberlains, such a shrill screaming of her ladies and her maids as had never yet struck terror to the heart of a practical joker.

I wish I could describe her actual personal appearance, but I can only give vaguely the impression she created. I have compared notes with others, but no one can help me. At the time one realised every minute detail, from the big pearls in her ears to the queer little pulling net which was hung rather than bound upon the black nose of her splendid horse; but, when one got home, and the pulse calmed down, and the fever from her presence abated, everything faded away, and there was really no more left than a Princess seen in a glorious dream.

This much I will say. The first thing that struck one—a thing to send a shiver of respectful admiration along one's bowing spine—was that she resembled to an incredible degree certain members of our own Royal House. Also, that her face, in colour, and tone, and apparent material, was as a very beautiful wax fruit kept for years under a glass shade. Her nose was long and straight; her lips full and red, with now and then a most chilling and thrilling little droop to them; her finely marked eyebrows had something faintly suggestive of the Chinese in their outward curve, while all round the hollow of her grey eyes there was a shadow, or tinge of blue—just such a faint,

misty, milky blue as she might have caught from the distant mountains of her own land, lying big, and vague, and terrible in the heavy silence of a summer's morning. But this is what I shall never know to my dying day: whether she was really pretty or not; whether, if you had met her tripping along the streets of her capital dressed as a milliner's wench with a box of millinery under her arm, you would have looked round as she passed and wished to carry the box for her. On the other hand, this much was certain, for a Princess, as Whistler said, she was strikingly, surprisingly, dazzlingly pretty.

The long, blank day was wearing on, and I was riding with Lord Whitmouth and Gaddesden, when a man galloping wildly brought us a most astounding piece of news.

Just in front of us was a royal groom leading her second horse. The empty saddle had a cover of drab box-cloth, and on a corner of the cloth there was a crown worked in coloured silk. The fellow was soberly dressed in black, with no button or piping of conventional livery; but, bound into his black cockade, there was a thin strand of gold, and this little yellow glitter was like the gold coin lying beneath a card table in the morning, and telling the sleepy flunkeys there has been high play the night before—small in itself, but suggesting the greatest of things. Pointing with his whip, Gaddesden had drawn our attention to the crown and, in a whisper, explained its inner and subtle meanings—the plain fillet below, the Iron Crown of the crusading kings; above that, the bulging helmet crown of the soldier monarchs of the Middle Ages; and, above that, on top, the imperial tiara—in fact, three crowns jammed into one, as though some member of the august line trying on his different sorts of headgear had been roughly bonneted, and had been too proud to take any notice of the vulgar assault.

Then came the galloping man to report that the Princess was talking to the Claimant.

We plunged forward through the wood, and as we went the news was confirmed on all sides.

They were 'talking together like one o'clock, and both of them dropping their h's all over the place.' 'Straight ahead, in the field just outside the gate,' we should find them.

It was true. There was a dense mob inside the wood, but on the other side of the gate, in the field, close by, so that you could hear every word that was spoken, the wonderful little group was now stationed with the Claimant in the middle of it.

'How long has this been going on?' asked Lord Whitmouth in an awful voice.

'Nearly an hour, m'lord,' said Bishop's stud-groom, too excited to wait for anybody else to answer. 'Ever sence we left Hill-Top Fields.'

'I see it's loose enough,' the Claimant was saying in his ordinary free-and-easy loud tones. 'But, believe me, it ain't the right thing for cross-country work.'

He was looking at her horse's nose, and evidently speaking about the queer little pulling net. We had all noticed it and wondered. It was the one strange and outlandish detail in the simple and orthodox outfit of her horses.

'It is a 'abit,' said the Princess, smiling graciously. 'My father 'as one on every 'orse. It does not 'urt 'im.'

She spoke English in the prettiest way, with a very slight and altogether charming accent—but sounded aspirates there were none.

'Oh, on your father's 'eavy carriage 'orses it's all right,' said the Claimant cheerfully. 'But on a 'unter it simply looks silly. Let me take it off 'im. I can see 'e don't like it, loose as it is.'

'If you wish it so much, yes,' said the Princess, laughing and nodding.

And taking her horse by the check strap, while the two counts sat watching with grave interest, Mr. Horton unhooked the net and entirely removed it.

'Now are you 'appy?' asked the Princess.

'Yes, and so's 'e,' said Mr. Horton, chuckling and coughing.

'This is what the net's meant for,' and he held it over his face like a veil, 'to 'ang on a lady's 'at, not on a 'orse's 'ead.'

I only relate the absolute fact that the underbred familiarity and vulgar buffoonery of the Claimant as he played with the net, while it turned us all sick, simply convulsed the Princess with mirth. Her white teeth sparkled in the sunlight, and she laughed, laughed, laughed, till she almost rolled in her saddle.

'So!' said one of the counts, 'he is vair-r-r-y funny!'

'Oh, this *must* be stopped!' groaned Lord Whitmouth. 'I must get to Sir Arthur—speak to him—*warn* him.'

It was what we all felt, but we also felt that the time for warning was most fatally past. As the jobmaster's groom had said, the mischief had been going on for nearly an hour.

I fancy that at this moment Horton became suddenly aware that all our indignant eyes were upon him, and that in a flash he realised the monstrous incongruity, the gross unseemliness

THE TRIO CAME LARKING ROUND THE WOOD

of his situation. Certainly he seemed to blush, and he began to cough, and silently turning his horse rode off down the field.

At this moment the Princess was looking in another direction. A happy diversion had been created by Whistler, Firwood, and Gorsebrake, our three show riders. Bored by the long draw, or possibly from some other motive, the trio came larking round the wood, taking their fences at racing speed—a sight that did one good to see. Just in front of the gate there was a ragged hedge, built up in weak places with wattle hurdles and rails, with a considerable drop into the next field, and I will make bold to say that the manner in which the three swept forward, fanned out, rose, dropped, and swung on again would not have been found wanting at Aintree.

The Princess had turned at the sound of the beating hoofs, had glanced indifferently at our splendid trio, and, without waiting to see them take the leap, had turned again.

'Why has he gone away? Go and bring 'im again,' she said to Sir Arthur, with an imperious gesture. ''E is not angry because that I have laughed. Tell 'im I *wish* to be made laugh. To laugh I love.'

And with a complaisant bow the mounted policeman trotted away to recover the Claimant.

We all heard it. 'Sandwich-Case' turned his eyes up to heaven, Lord Whitmouth grew purple with anger, and Major Gaddesden banged out an exclamation which was little better than an oath.

Consider our position. We—*we*—the North-East Mudshire Hunt were being judged on the appearance, manners and general style of this man. Before our faces, the one and only follower that we were heartily ashamed of was being taken and studied as a typical member of the N.-E. M. The matter would go forth to Europe and we could not stop it. It would be passed on from court to court, and henceforth and for evermore, when one foreign prince asked another 'Are the N.-E. M. a smart lot?' the answer would be 'Well, no-o-o. Hardly.' 'Are they well mounted?' 'Certainly not.' 'In one word, my prince, are they Court-worthy?' 'Well, if you ask me, *No*.'

You are to understand that no one wanted to be talking to the Princess himself. Far from it. Each of us, I suppose, would have snatched some sort of fearful joy from a brief conversation with her, had she chosen to honour us with a few words, but we had all studiously kept aloof. We had avoided

her as though she had been plague-stricken, judging that in so doing we had shown the highest and the best of all good manners, the studious reverse of the vulgar 'mobbing' which we had always understood was the one thing distressing to Royalty.

But if she *wanted* to talk, if we could have guessed that she was feeling lonely and desired a chat over local or foreign affairs, if that chin-tufted, poker-backed, mounted jackass of a British equerry had dropped us a hint, she would soon have found people to talk to, without calling in the assistance of the Claimant.

But the Claimant was there before us, and no one could oust him now. The laughing and the h-dropping continued, and we could do nothing but listen and turn faint.

'No, but listen to me,' the Princess was saying. 'It was left to me. He dared not declare himself. I must speak. I could not keep silent.'

Her manner was at once eager, confidential, explanatory. Horton was riding close on her right. On her left was one of the counts; on Horton's right the other count. They were all four intent and eager. Behind them rode Sir Arthur, and behind Sir Arthur rode Lord Whitmouth, Gorsebrake and myself, literally paralysed by the tone and matter of this extraordinary conversation.

'Now do you say I 'ave no 'eart?' cried the Princess.

'I say, ma'm, you deceived the Baron,' said Horton very seriously.

'So!' said the Count, 'I have said so. Sooner let her go without.'

'Go without!' cried the Princess indignantly. '*Me* without? Nevair-r-r. Let 'im go wivout 'imself.'

'But remember all you risked,' said the Claimant gravely. 'You were twenty-four at the time, remember. Where were the King and Queen? Suppose they were *both* against you. Never trust a lady's 'eart is a saying with me. But the poor Baron believed.'

'The poor Baron should not 'ave kept silent,' said the Princess scornfully.

'No, ma'm,' said Horton kindly, but firmly. 'If you ask me seriously, I say you were wrong.'

Whether by accident or design I cannot say, but Sir Arthur kept dropping back behind the others, and as, of course, we could not ride by him, the others went out of earshot and we could hear no more.

But enough surely. We stared at one another blankly. This

man, the Claimant, a total stranger, a chance acquaintance made two hours ago, was called upon to hear and criticise the conduct of her life; was called upon to listen to the story of some youthful love affair (at the age of twenty-four they had said), some mad escapade with a rash young baron—the sort of thing for which men lie in secret dungeons or disappear in Siberian salt mines—was urged to listen and to *judge*.

The thing was too incredible, and yet Whitmouth, Gorsebrake and I were not *all* dreaming, and we had all heard.

Late in the afternoon we had our run, and it did us all good. It was a stout fox who took us over some of the cream of the N.-E. M. country, and they worried and tore him in a ploughed field on the hillside ten miles from Whitmouth market-place.

Throughout the hunt Gorsebrake, Firwood, and Whistler held pride of place, riding all three with astonishing dash and verve. Evidently steering by these three red coats, the Princess, with a count on each side of her, rode the thing through, from the Tally-ho! to the Whoo-hoop, in a most royal fashion. Without slip or trip, or rush or hang, the noble brown horse and its imperial rider took everything as it came, and some big things among the rest, thanks to the pilots, simply, easily, as a matter of course. The trained accuracy and natural power with which the brown horse fenced were truly astonishing, while the manner in which the two counts lay back over the obstacles, whether large or small, till their horses' tails almost brushed their silk hats, commanded respect and wonder. A shade stiff, a trifle scholastic, the riding of the second three may possibly have been, but, simply considered as a means of getting to hounds across a country, all admitted it was as effectual, business-like, and reliable as the loose grace and centaur-like balance of the three ahead.

No stranger could have accused our worthy Master of a sycophantic compliment to royalty in giving her the brush; for, without a shadow of doubt, she deserved it, and when it was solemnly presented, and received with many a gracious little nod and smile, there were many who, had they thought court etiquette permitted it, would have liked to raise a cheer.

Well, it was all over. The English equerry had not proved himself a flier, but he had somehow or other worked out the line of the chase and arrived just in time to take over command of

the homeward procession. With hats off, we had watched her on to the high road, and then, when she and her suite had clattered away, all the strain of the thing was removed, and we were free to follow at our leisure and to hear what the Claimant had to say for himself.

'Well, now—er—Mr. Horton,' said Lord Whitmouth, 'did she—er—express any opinion about the—er—hunt, generally?'

We were all crowded about him as we jogged along the high road. That gallop had done us all good, and, besides, she had bowed to each individual survivor of the chase and said 'Good-night' to several as though to old friends.

'Well,' said the Claimant, apologetically, 'if you must have it, she don't think much of English fox-hunting. She says she thinks it all 'umbug, but we were no *worse* than the Quorn or the Belvoir.'

'Oh!'

'But,' she says, 'if you ask me, I've 'ad more fun 'unting with 'awks in 'Ungary than with all the 'ounds in England.'

This was received with a burst of laughter, in the midst of which the Princess, for the last time, gave an exhibition of her royal, imperial, and most disconcerting trick of suddenly appearing when you thought that she was at least a mile away. With a clatter of heels she was right among us. That soft-brained equerry had led her down a lane, instead of keeping to the plain high road, and, the error being discovered, they had returned to the road behind us.

'Com', Mister Orton, if you do not wish to be late for our little dinner and our little game of Britsch,' the Princess called out as she trotted by.

'Komm!' said one count.

'Komm!' cried the other, clattering after.

'Quarter to eight, Mr. Orton,' said Sir Arthur Chough, the mounted policeman, following fast, and adding in solemn confidence some directions of which I only caught the words: 'Dinner jacket—no tails—black tie—white waistcoat if you *like*.'

I only give my private opinion—for what it is worth—but the chase had brought colour to her cheek, her eyes flashed large and soft, and there was the most charming littie smile on her lips as she trotted by us, and my own opinion is that, in those odd circumstances which I have suggested, you would simply *long* to carry the box for her.

'Do I—er—understand,' said Lord Whitmouth very solemnly, 'do I understand that she has asked you to—er—dine with her?'

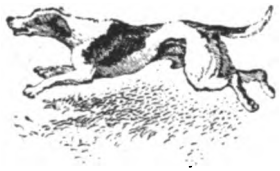
'Well,' said Horton, and a modest blush mantled in his broad homely face, 'the fact is, you see, she is dead keen on 'er rubber of bridge, and it appears that equerry nor her lady don't play the game, so she and the counts are only *three*. It cropped up in conversation' (it always did crop up in the Claimant's talk), 'and she asked me to make a fourth—simply that—just to make a fourth.'

Away down the broad high road H.I. and R.H. had turned in her saddle, and raised her hand in a beckoning and yet reproving manner.

The Claimant clapped spurs to his horse and lumbered away after her.

There was no doubt about it—we might laugh, and we did—but on that great lumbering brute to-day he had cut us all down.

Next day an imperial temperature had risen suddenly or a royal pulse fluttered weak and faint beneath the finger of anxious science. Something happened—I forget what—and the State officials of the Continent issued a four-lined whip urging all those in the direct line to be in their places. So *our* Princess was called home and we never saw her again.



ON A BIKE IN THE BOSCH

BY SUSAN, COUNTESS OF MALMESBURY

BOTH the Haag'sche and the Scheveningen'sche Bosch are the property of the Dutch nation, and are kept up like a stately English park; better indeed than some, for the roads are like the paths in our gardens, rolled and covered with the most beautiful crushed shell gravel. The Hague and Scheveningen are so close together that it is extremely difficult to know where the one begins and the other ends. The same may be said of their parks, of which there are miles, intersected by lakes and canals.

It was a lovely morning, clear, bright, and cold, when I prepared to start for a ride in the Haag'sche Bosch, accompanied by a kind Dutch acquaintance to pilot me through the difficulties, if any, which I might encounter. There happened to be that day an utter absence of the strong north wind which vexes the soul and flutters the skirts of ladies bicycling here, and having disentangled my machine from about forty others precariously balanced against each other in the entrance hall of our hotel, we mounted and were off. Off, alas! in my case, like the handle of a jug, for I had not proceeded twenty yards from the door when my bicycle slipped from under me, and I should have had a bad fall on the stone-paved street, had I not been on the *qui vive* and able to spring off, saving myself and mount from a closer acquaintance with the soil of Holland. In my agony of mind at having to ride on the right—to me, wrong—side of the road, I had

forgotten the many warnings given me as to trams. These conveyances, which are the blessing or curse of The Hague, as you may happen to view them, are of various sorts—electric, steam, and those drawn in the ordinary way by horses. They all ply from dawn till the middle of the night, at intervals of a few minutes, and announce themselves by loud ringing of bells. The noise is deafening, as they rattle over the stones, and the numerous intersecting rails are so deeply and widely cut as to engulf one's tyre whole, without a possibility of recovery except by dismounting.

INSPECTOR TESTING MILK

We took a roundabout way to the Bosch from the Lange Voorhaut, whence we started. The Lange Voorhaut is the principal square, and one of the most fashionable quarters of The Hague. To begin with, it is central, and, secondly, it is removed from any canal, which renders it less liable to malaria from stagnant water. It is gravelled all over the centre, and planted with beautiful trees—chestnuts, at the time of which I write, in full blossom, beeches and limes, dotted with a tender veil of young transparent green: the spring in Holland being later than ours. Under these, having recovered my equanimity, I pass with my companion, and turn off to the right by the Viver, or fish-pond, where the water is running and fresh, being pumped in every day.

The Viverberg, as the row of houses on the north side of the Viver is called, is much sought after for this reason, and also for the beauty of the situation. On the south side is the Binnenhof, and here the Houses of Parliament and public offices are situated. The whole is surrounded by pink horse-chestnuts in flower, and there is an island in the midst, partly for the satisfaction and comfort of the ducks and swans, partly also for ornament, planted as it is with red rhododendrons. On our way we meet a number of motors – cars, tricycles, and bicycles—most of which leave, as they vibrate along, a scent strong enough for twenty packs of hounds to follow. We also see a costermonger's cart, about the size of those drawn by donkeys in London. To this three powerful dogs are harnessed abreast, strongly muzzled. They are lying down to rest, and I get off to examine them more closely. I come to the conclusion that the central animal in the shafts must suffer a good deal from the leather band round his body, the tightness of which is emphasised by the line of draft of the cart, which seems to me very high. The muzzles, too, do not permit them to open their mouths as wide and hang out their tongues as far as we know dogs like to do. But presently their owner comes out; they bark with delight at the idea of being allowed to proceed, and fling themselves with enthusiasm into their collars. It horrifies me to see their driver, a tall, heavy man, get on the cart, while the dogs strain cheerfully at their work, wagging their tails, and trotting along at a great pace. I looked at their feet while they were resting and saw no signs there, or where the collars press, of any soreness or galling. I was told that, on being harnessed in the morning, the dogs bark and dance about with pleasure; but whether this be true or not, they are obviously on the best of terms with their owners, and do their work with great goodwill. One must believe, however, that they suffer from the dust and heat, and long journeys with heavy loads, which look so disproportionate to their size; but they are in excellent condition, being fed on a special kind of bread and on horseflesh, and we know that no dog who is suffering much in body, or unhappy in his mind, will carry his tail in the air as these cart-dogs always seem to do. 'Why should not a strong dog work?' asked my Dutch friend.

The size and draft of the carts, and weight of the loads and harness are all regulated by law in Holland, the loads being in proportion to the weight of the dogs. They are on the whole well treated, but, as in England, a drunken owner will always inflict untold horrors on the wretched animals whose sad fate it

is to be in his power. The breed generally used is a cross between a mastiff and a setter, but I have seen every kind of terrier, even, in harness.

We thread in and out among the traffic, the foot passengers, who are utterly indifferent to our existence, the Juggernaut motors, deafening trams, and last, but not least, fellow-bicyclists, doubled up over the lowest handle-bars I have ever seen, and armed with fog-horns, which they occasionally, but by no means regularly, use as a warning of their approach. They steal along, shaving and scraping you against the wall in the narrow streets;

CART-DOG RESTING

but no one seems to mind. Indeed, the whole Dutch attitude of mind is a good-natured and cheerful one. There seem to be very few accidents, in spite of all the various circumstances which would appear almost to ensure them. Only one was witnessed by our party, and that was of rather a strange kind. A boy riding a cart-horse without a saddle, and gaping in all directions except that in which he was going, met a cyclist at the corner of a street; neither could stop, but the horse reared suddenly and the cyclist passed under him, both escaping without injury.

London, as the Irishman said, would be so much nicer if it were built in the country; but The Hague actually is built in the

country, and has no suburbs. Trees are planted along the canals, and a great part of the town skirts the Haag'sche Bosch, while at Scheveningen each villa has quite a large garden.

We proceed round the Vivet, and back through the Binnenhof, reaching a canal which we cross in order to enter the Bosch.

I had often heard that lavender-water was an absolutely necessary adjunct to a stay at The Hague, but certainly never expected to be greeted with such a smell as that which we encountered at this point.

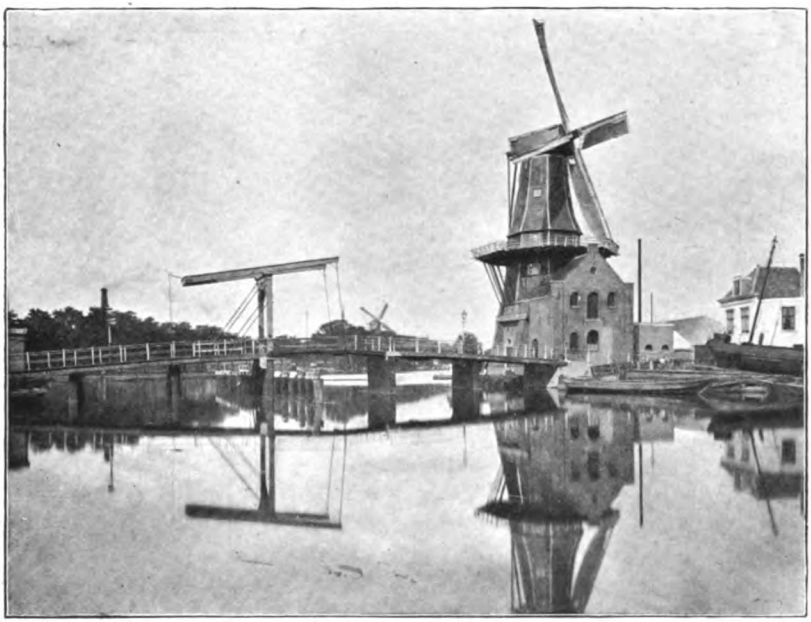
DUTCH GIRL

It is difficult to believe that such an odour of stagnant water can be harmless, or how any one can live, as many people do, with their windows opening right on to it.

But, happily, we are over the bridge, and then our pleasures begin, for a more beautiful wood I have never seen. Cyclists are allowed on all the paths, which are most excellently well kept, the tall, arching beeches protecting them from the wind, and there being hardly any hills or even undulating ground, we get along with little or no exertion. Perhaps it is the absence of hills which makes the Dutch use such highly geared machines, but this is a peculiarity which, in addition to the low handle-bars and heavy frames, makes riding them rather hard work. It is certainly better to bring one's own bicycle, in spite of the trouble in travelling. The charges for hiring in Holland are, moreover, very high. I paid ten gulden for three days.

I felt rather nervous, at first, riding on the paths on the right side of the road, and among a crowd of children armed with hoops, and was terrified by the suicidal dogs, their heads caged in

what are here called 'bite baskets' (there has recently been a hydrophobia scare); but by degrees it seemed a relief when foot-passengers, instead of wildly dashing backwards and forwards to escape slaughter by cycle, simply walked straight at me, their gaze riveted on vacancy, and left me to avoid them in my own way. The avenues of beeches in the Bosch are some of the most beautiful I have ever seen, and give one quite the impression of a Gothic cathedral. Here and there a primitive oil lamp is suspended by a cord from tree to tree. High overhead the



A BRANCH OF THE RHINE AT LEYDEN

branches meet in feathery arches, through which the sunlight glints, and underfoot the most perfect shell-gravel and well-drained and rolled paths are a luxury as rare as it is delightful. We meet two policemen patrolling the wood on bicycles, and, behind them—a sight I have never seen in England—an officer in full uniform scorching for dear life. He is not scorching so fast, however, that he is unable to stop suddenly, jump off, and salute with military precision two other officers whom he meets.

Beneath the beeches there is a carpet of familiar things, such as wild parsley, and a tall sort of grass like oats; but their colour is much more vivid than with us, indeed Holland out-emeralds

the Emerald Isle in the translucent greenness which the damp soil gives, not only to the actual vegetation, but to the stems of the trees.

The 'House in the Wood,' or Huis Ten Bosch, where the Peace Conference assembled day by day, lies to the right of our path as we ride along. It is a charming house, large for a private residence, but small for a palace, prettily situated, rather plain outside from an architectural point of view, but beautifully decorated by great Dutch masters inside. My companion, who has an orange card of admission announcing his status as a delegate, passes me in by the gate, and we walk through the

BEACH AT SCHEVENINGEN

silent rooms, where, earlier in the day, a modern Tower of Babel has been trying, in queer official French, to reconcile the irreconcilable. But it grows late, and if we are to dine at Leyden, as we intend, we must start at once, leaving behind us the shady winding alleys and lakes, clothed to their lips with water-plants, which are such a lovely feature of the wood.

We now emerge on to the main road, which is paved with clinkers, a horrible form of torture to the cyclist, full of bumps and lumps, and with a continual jar, even when the clinkers are smoothly laid.

I can never understand why, but all the Dutch roads with which I am acquainted are liberally sprinkled with broken glass. This is most dangerous, both for horses, cyclists and foot-passengers, and it is difficult to imagine why it should be allowed.

The wood continues on each side of our way, with occasional fields deep with grass, and full of large black and white cows, something of the shorthorn breed in appearance. Many of these cows and also some of the horses grazing wear canvas coats, like a lady's pet dog.

Soon we come to a large house, standing back from the road, from which it is separated by a wide canal only. In Holland they are not fond of fences which bar the view, and which they look upon as one of the great disfigurements of our English parks and landscapes.

ZEELAND FISH-GIRL

'This,' says my companion, 'is called the *Pauw*. A bird,' he explains; and, seeing my puzzled face, adds: 'What your Lord Beaconsfield was so fond of.' A light breaks in upon me. 'Peacock!' I exclaim; 'what a strange name for a royal residence.' Here the may is in full blossom, the beeches, green and copper-coloured, in all the glory of renewed youth, and down among the grass thousands of little blue-eyed flowers look up and laugh.

We meet more dogs, toiling but cheerful, more scorchers male and female—the latter always in skirts, and pass numerous wayside inns of a German tea-garden order. I cannot linger over this peaceful scene, for we are coming to one of the many branches of the Rhine, which figures curiously in Dutch orthography as Rijn, and which, after still further splitting, is at last discharged

ignominiously through an iron pipe into the sea not many miles away. Thence, by a swinging bridge, over the wet ditch of the city of Leyden, into the town and to our longed-for tea. I think what struck me most at Leyden were some charcoal sketches on the wall of the staircase of the University. These are said to have been done in a night by one of the students, and represent the sorrows and joys of the rejected and accepted candidates for a degree. They were so good that the authorities themselves, who figure in these caricatures, have never had the heart to destroy them. We returned from Leyden by rail, on account of

CANAL AT DELFT

the clinkers, which had given us a severe shaking on the way out.

Another day we rode through the Scheveningen'sche Bosch, going through the wood itself and along the lake, emerging on to the banks of a great canal, which here flows into the sea, regulated by a powerful sluice. The sides of this canal are strengthened by stones cut from basaltic columns, such as we have at Staffa. They are black, and their shapes, which are those of octagon basaltic crystals, fit curiously into one another. Here, again, the beauty and interest of the scene are marred by a

smell which must be, one would think, excessively malarious, as is also that strange chill which, on the hottest days, at sunset seems to settle into one's very bones. The ride to Scheveningen is much pleasanter than that to Leyden, as there are foot-paths, smooth and unclinkered, for the happy cyclist's use. The road is bordered with pretty little villas, set in gardens, open to the road, with a full view of the inmates sitting at tea outside their front doors, and the road shaded by magnificent trees. On the beach we see fisherwomen with the curious Zeeland headdress, surmounted in some cases by an ordinary hat or bonnet. They wear no sleeves, and their arms are purple with exposure to the weather. Of this colour they are said to be very proud, but in winter the skin cracks and bleeds, so they must suffer like their sisters in other ranks of life *pour être belles*.

The ride to Delft is also quite a short one, and here the clinkered highway may often be avoided by keeping to the two paths along the canals.

Delicious milk, bread, butter, strawberries,[1] and excellent tea and coffee, can be obtained almost anywhere; and the absolute flatness of the country must be a very great advantage for long-distance rides.

Some of the more adventurous among our party rode to Rotterdam and some to Amsterdam, which are no great distance from The Hague, and which are well worth seeing, particularly the latter.

Holland is by no means a cheap place to travel in, as a gulden, which is worth one shilling and eightpence of our money, is the smallest sum demanded for ordinary services, and fetches in value about what our shilling does in England. But bicyclists are well and kindly treated wherever they go, and the natural friendly politeness of the whole Dutch nation, great and small, is very pleasant and attractive. For although it is generally necessary with them (as with other nations) to make a strict bargain in matters of business, they are often willing to render strangers quite a variety of little services, and to ask nothing in return.

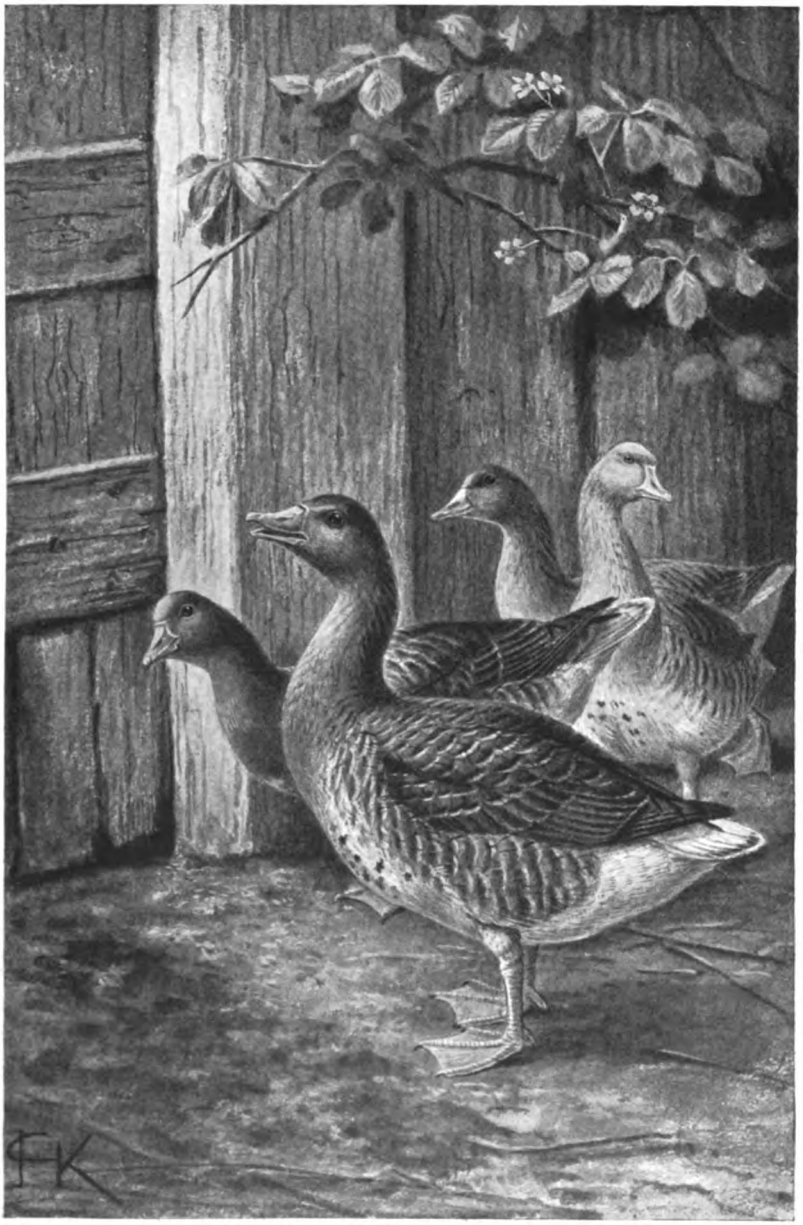
[1] Strawberries, early in May, were seven shillings and sixpence a pound in London, and about ninepence for the same quantity here.

GEESE: AN APPRECIATION AND A MEMORY

BY W. H. HUDSON

One evening, in the neighbourhood of Lyndhurst, I saw a flock of geese marching in a long procession, led, as their custom is, by a majestical gander; they were coming home from their feeding ground in the forest, and when I spied them were approaching their owner's cottage. Arrived at the wooden gate of the garden in front of the cottage, the leading bird drew up square before it, and with repeated loud screams demanded admittance. Pretty soon, in response to the summons, a man came out of the cottage, walked briskly down the garden path and opened the gate, but only wide enough to put his right leg through; then, placing his foot and knee against the leading bird, he thrust him roughly back; as he did so three young geese pressed forward and were allowed to pass in; then the gate was slammed in the face of the gander and his followers, and the man went back to the cottage. The gander's indignation was fine to see, though he had most probably experienced the same rude treatment on previous occasions. Drawing up to the gate again he called more loudly than before; then deliberately lifted a leg, and placing his broad webbed foot like an open hand against the gate actually tried to push it open! His strength was not sufficient; but he continued to push and to call until the man returned to open the gate and let the birds go in.

It was an amusing scene, and the behaviour of the bird struck me as characteristic. It was this lofty spirit of the goose



DRAWING UP TO THE GATE AGAIN HE CALLED MORE LOUDLY THAN BEFORE

and adhesion to his rights, as well as his noble appearance and the stately formality and deliberation of his conduct, that caused me very long ago to respect and admire him above all our domestic birds. Doubtless from the æsthetic point of view other species are his superiors in some things: the mute swan, 'floating double,' graceful and majestical, with arched neck and ruffled scapulars; the oriental pea-fowl in his glittering mantle, the helmeted guinea-fowl, powdered with stars, and the red cock with his military bearing—a shining Elizabethan Knight of the feathered world, singer, lover, and fighter. It is hardly to be doubted that, mentally, the goose is above all these; and to my mind his, too, is the grander figure; but it is a very familiar figure, and we have not forgotten the reason of its presence among us. He satisfies a material want only too generously, and on this account is too much associated in the mind with mere flavours. We keep a swan or a peacock for ornament; a goose for the table—he is the Michaelmas and Christmas bird. A somewhat similar debasement has fallen on the sheep in Australia. To the man in the bush he is nothing but a tallow-elaborating organism, whose destiny it is to be cast, at maturity, into the melting vat, and whose chief use it is to lubricate the machinery of civilisation. It a little shocks, and at the same time amuses, our Colonial, to find that great artists in the parent country admire this most unpoetic beast, and waste their time and talents in painting it.

Some three or four years ago, in the *Alpine Journal*, Sir Martin Conway gave a lively and amusing account of his first meeting with A. D. McCormick, the artist who subsequently accompanied him to the Karakoram Himalayas. 'A friend,' he wrote, 'came to me bringing in his pocket a crumpled-up water sketch or impression of a lot of geese. I was struck by the breadth of the treatment, and I remember saying that the man who could see such monumental magnificence in a flock of geese ought to be the kind of man to paint mountains, and render somewhat of their majesty.'

I will venture to say that he looked at the sketch or impression with the artist's clear eye, but had not previously so looked at the living creature; or had not seen it clearly, owing to the mist of images—if that be a permissible word—that floated between it and his vision—remembered flavours and fragrances, of rich meats, and of sage and onions and sweet apple sauce. When this interposing mist is not present, who can fail to admire the goose; that stately bird-shaped monument of clouded

grey or crystal white marble, to be seen standing conspicuous on any village green or common in England! For albeit a conquered bird, something of the ancient wild and independent spirit survives to give him a prouder bearing than we see in his fellow feathered servants. He is the least timid of our domestic birds, yet even at a distance he regards your approach in an attitude distinctly reminiscent of the grey-lag goose, the wariest of wild fowl, stretching up his neck and standing motionless and watchful, a sentinel on duty. Seeing him thus, if you deliberately go near him he does not slink or scuttle away, as other birds of meaner spirits do, but boldly advances to meet and challenge you. How keen his senses are, how undimmed by ages of captivity the ancient instinct of watchfulness is in him, everyone must know who has slept in lonely country houses. At some late hour of the night the sleeper was suddenly awakened by the loud screaming of the geese; they had discovered the approach of some secret prowler, a fox perhaps, a thievish tramp or gipsy, before a dog barked. In many a lonely farmhouse throughout the land you will be told that the goose is the better watch-dog.

When we consider this bird purely from the æsthetic point of view—I mean to say, geese generally, all of the thirty species of the sub-family Anserinæ, distributed over the cold and temperate regions of the globe—we find that several of them possess a rich and beautiful colouring, and, if not so proud, a more graceful carriage than our domestic bird, or its original, the wild grey-lag goose. To know these birds is to greatly admire them, and we may now add that this admiration is no new thing on the earth. It is the belief of distinguished Egyptologists that a fragmentary fresco, discovered at Maydoom, dates back to a time at least 3,000 years before our era, and is probably the oldest picture in the world. It is a representation of six geese, of four different species, depicted, it is said, with marvellous fidelity, and a thorough appreciation of form and colouring.

Among the most distinguished in appearance and carriage of the handsome exotic species is the Magellanic goose, one of the five or six species of the Antarctic genus Chloephaga, found in Patagonia and the Magellan Islands. One peculiarity of this bird is that the sexes differ in colouring, the male being mostly white, whereas the prevailing colour of the female is a ruddy brown; a fine rich colour set off with some white, grey, intense cinnamon, and beautiful black mottlings. Seen on the wing a flock presents a somewhat singular appearance, as of two distinct

species associating together, as we may see when by chance gulls and rooks, or sheldrakes and black scoters, mix in one flock.

This fine bird has long been introduced into this country, and as it breeds freely it promises to become quite common. I can see it any day; but these exiles, pinioned and imprisoned in parks, are not quite like the Magellanic geese I was intimate with in former years, in Patagonia and in the southern pampas of Buenos Ayres, where they wintered every year in incredible numbers, and were called bustards by the natives. To see them again, as I have seen them, by day and all day long in their thousands, and to listen again by night to their wild cries, I would willingly give up, in exchange, all the invitations to dine which I shall receive, all the novels I shall read, all the plays I shall witness, in the next three years; and some other miserable pleasures could be thrown in. Listening to the birds when, during migration, on a still frosty night, they flew low, following the course of some river, flock succeeding flock all night long; or heard from a herdsman's hut on the pampas, when thousands of the birds had encamped for the night on the plain hard by, the effect of their many voices (like that of their appearance when seen flying) was singular, as well as beautiful, on account of the striking contrasts in the various sounds they uttered. On cold nights they are most loquacious, and their voices may be heard by the hour, rising and falling, now few, and now many, taking part in the endless confabulation—a talkee-talkee and concert in one; a chatter as of many magpies, the solemn, deep *honk-honk*, the long, grave note changing to a shuddering sound; and, most wonderful, the fine silvery whistle of the male, steady or tremulous, now long and now short, and modulated a hundred ways—wilder and more beautiful than the night-cry of the widgeon, brighter than the voice of any shore bird, or any warbler, thrush or wren, or the sound of any wind instrument.

It is probable that those who have never known the Magellanic goose in a state of nature are best able to appreciate its fine qualities in its semi-domestic state in England. At all events the enthusiasm with which a Londoner spoke of this bird in my presence some weeks ago came to me rather as a surprise. It was at the studio of our greatest animal painter, one Sunday evening, and the talk was partly about birds, when an elderly gentleman said that he was pleased to meet some one who would be able to tell him the name of a wonderful bird he had lately seen in St. James's Park. His description was vague; he could not say what its colour was, nor what sort of beak it had, nor

whether its feet were webbed or not; but it was a large bird, and there were two of them. It was the way this bird had comported itself towards him that had so taken him. As he went through the park at the side of the enclosure, he caught sight of them some distance away in the grass, and the birds observing that he had stopped in his walk to regard them, left off feeding, or whatever they were doing, and came to him. Not to be fed—it was impossible to believe that they had any such motive; it was solely and purely a friendly feeling towards him which caused them immediately to respond to his look, and to approach him, to salute him, in their way. And when they had approached to within three or four yards of where he stood, advancing with a quiet dignity, and had then uttered a few soft, low sounds, accompanied with certain graceful gestures, they turned and left him; but not abruptly, with their backs towards him—oh, no, they did nothing so common; they were not like other birds—they were perfect in everything; and, moving from him, half-paused at intervals, half-turning first to one side then the other, inclining their heads as they went. Here our old friend rose and paced up and down the floor, bowing to this side and that, to try to give us some faint idea of the birds' gentle courtesy and exquisite grace. It was, he assured us, most astonishing; the birds' gestures and motions were those of a human being, but in their perfection immeasurably superior to anything of the kind to be seen in any Court in Europe or the world.

The birds he had described, I told him, were no doubt Upland Geese.

'Geese!' he exclaimed, in a tone of disgust. 'Are you speaking seriously? Geese? Oh, no, nothing like geese—a sort of ostrich!'

It was plain that he had no accurate knowledge of birds; if he had caught sight of a kingfisher or green woodpecker he would probably have described it as a sort of peacock. Of the goose, he only knew that it is a ridiculous, awkward creature, proverbial for its stupidity, although very good to eat; and it wounded him to find that anyone could think so meanly of his intelligence and taste as to imagine him capable of greatly admiring any bird called a goose, or any bird in any way related to a goose.

I will now leave the subject of the beautiful Antarctic Goose, the 'bustard' of the horsemen of the pampas, and 'sort of ostrich' of our Londoner, to relate a memory of my early years, and of how I first became an admirer of the familiar domestic

goose. Never since have I looked on it in such favourable conditions.

Two miles from my home there stood an old mud-built house, thatched with rushes, and shaded by a few ancient, half-dead trees. Here lived a very old woman with her two unmarried daughters, both withered and grey as their mother; indeed, in appearance, they were three amiable sister witches, all very old. The high ground on which the house stood sloped down to an extensive reed and rush-grown marsh, the source of an important stream; it was a paradise of wild fowl, swan, roseate spoonbill, herons white and herons grey, ducks of half a dozen species, snipe and painted snipe, and stilt and plover, the glossy ibis, and the great blue-crested ibis with a powerful voice. All these interested—I might say fascinated—me less than the tame geese that spent most of their time in or on the borders of the marsh in the company of the wild birds. The three old women were so fond of their geese that they would not part with one for love or money; the most they would ever do would be to present an egg, in the laying season, to some visitor as a special mark of esteem.

It was a grand spectacle, when the entire flock, numbering upwards of a thousand, stood up on the marsh and raised their necks on a person's approach. It was grand to hear them too, when, as often happened, they all burst out in a great screaming concert. I can hear that mighty uproar now!

These geese could fly remarkably well, and eventually some of them, during their flights down stream, discovered at a distance of about eight miles from home, the immense, low, marshy plain bordering the sea-like Plata river. There were no houses and no people in that endless green, wet land, and they liked it so well that they visited it more and more often, in small flocks of a dozen to twenty birds, going and coming all day long, until all knew the road. It was observed that when a man on foot or on horseback appeared in sight of one of these flocks, the birds at this distance from home were as wary as really wild birds, and watched the stranger's approach in alarm, and when he was still at a considerable distance rose and flew away beyond sight.

The old dames grieved at this wandering spirit in their beloved birds, and became more and more anxious for their safety. But by this time the aged mother was fading visibly into the tomb, only so slowly that long months went by while she lay on her bed, a weird-looking object—I remember her well—leaner, greyer, more ghost-like, than the silent, lean, grey

heron in the marsh hard by. And at last she faded out of life, aged, it was said by her descendants, a hundred and ten years; and, after she was dead, it was found that of that great company of noble birds there remained only a small remnant of about forty, and these were probably incapable of sustained flight. The others returned no more; but whether they met their death from duck and swan shooters in the marshes, or had followed the great river down to the sea, forgetting their home, was never known. For about a year after they had ceased going back, small flocks were occasionally seen in the marshes, very wild and strong on the wing, but even these, too, vanished at last.

It is probable that, but for powder and shot, the domestic goose of Europe, by occasionally taking to a feral life in thinly settled countries, would ere this have become widely distributed over the earth.

WOLFE AND WASHINGTON AS SPORTSMEN

BY A. G. BRADLEY

I TRUST I shall not be suspected of having been led to couple these two famous names together by the mere fact of their both commencing with a W, or from any partiality for the clap-trap of an alliterative title. Wolfe and Washington were in years almost contemporaries: fortunately for the latter they were not so as commanders, or the world's history would to a certainty have been writ differently. But being what they were—the two greatest Anglo-Saxon soldiers of the century between Marlborough and Wellington—much of the private life of either has been laid bare, and it is of real interest to those who care for such things to find what a large share of their attention in their leisure hours was given to field sports. A much more than common interest seems to me to be involved in the matter, from the fact of the one being an American, the other a British, sportsman of that far-off period. Nor yet again were either of them mere dashing, careless soldiers who might have been expected to spend most of their days in amusement, but, on the contrary, serious, hardworking, long-headed gentlemen, who while winning their respective ways to immortality regarded sport almost as part of the business, or at least as one of the chief charms of life. Apart, however, from the natural interest attaching to two such men, the correspondence of Wolfe and the journals and letters of Washington give a most instructive picture of the life then led by the class of which each

was a representative. If the hundred and seventy or so long letters written by Wolfe to his parents and intimate friends between his seventeenth and his thirty-third year (the last of his life) were those of some obscure captain in a marching regiment, they would be of infinite value as illustrating the everyday life of a soldier of George II.'s time in peace and war. It is only with the sporting associations of this illustrious pair, however, that we have here to do, and it is curious by the way of comparison to find the Englishman the keener of the two with the gun, and but a joyous and irresponsible and occasional galloper after hounds, while the American is a painstaking and accomplished M.F.H. as things went then, even from an English standpoint, and steeped to the lips in the science of fox-hunting.

To begin with Wolfe, the senior of the two by five years, he was not, like Washington, bred to sport from his boyhood. His childhood at Westerham and Greenwich, and his schooldays at the latter place, gave little scope for such things. At fifteen he plunged at once into a sterner pursuit than that of foxes, namely, that of fighting Frenchmen in the Low Countries. A year later he was serving his regiment as adjutant through the bloody fight of Dettingen. At twenty-one he was back again in England, a captain and veteran of five campaigns. After fighting at Falkirk and Culloden, he took part in two more campaigns abroad, and then settled down at the Peace to garrison life, mostly in Scotland. It was at two or three and twenty, like many a subaltern of these days in India, he found his first opportunity for cultivating a taste for rod and gun.

But sport was not fashionable among the officers of line regiments in Wolfe's time, and this makes his own taste for it more worthy of note. Shooting and fishing, at any rate, were not, as in these days, part of the programme of the average officer's life. The journals of several soldiers—of Knox, for instance, in New Brunswick, of Anburey in America, and of Burt in the Highlands, all penned either just before or soon after Wolfe's sporting period—lay little stress on it, though the opportunities were in all cases especially great. Feasting and card-playing, social festivities and theatricals, with some chatter about horses, seem to fill the idle hours, so far as can be gathered from the diaries and letters of the Georgian officer of infantry. Nor is there any evidence that it was thought a desirable thing to be a sportsman, or that skill in the chase procured a man any particular respect.

Wolfe, though enthusiastic about his profession, was wholly

bored by ordinary dissipation. He would drink moderately and even swear a little, he tells his father, by way of making himself agreeable, but the mess-room part of military life filled him with ennui. This sense of boredom too was quite sincere, for he was popular in spite of it with his brother officers, and was extremely fond of dancing and society in the wider sense. He hated Scotland, and growls at the country and the climate through years of correspondence. For months at a time his regiment was scattered in detachments all over the north. It may possibly therefore have been for lack of congenial occupation that he first took to shooting and fishing, but he certainly became in a short time very fond of both, and his letters from the Highland forts, where he remained for years stamping out disaffection among the clansmen, are full of allusions to sport, though he makes but little mention of his brother officers as his companions on the moors or by the streams. Nor is his keenness less interesting because he was evidently something of a duffer. He had learnt to ride young, no doubt, and there is some outside evidence that he was a very passable horseman after the notions of that day. But he confesses to being for a long time a poor shot, and though an ardent fisherman and well set up with tackle, his silence on the result of his efforts is, for an angler even of the year 1750, significant indeed. The moors in Inverness-shire would seem at that time to have been free to any one who cared to shoot over them. In the spring of 1748 Wolfe is in command of the regiment at Inverness, as his colonel, Lord Bury, a bird of very fine feather, seldom deigns to look up his command. His lordship, however, is fond enough of shooting, though he doesn't like soldiering in peace time, and when he does come north he and Wolfe shoot together. 'Lord Bury is expected,' writes the young deputy-colonel to his father. 'He will stay six weeks and then swear there is no standing it any longer, and will then say, "Wolfe, you'll stay in the Highlands. You cannot with any face ask to quit the regiment, so dispersed as it is, but in November, my dear friend, you shall come to London for three months."' (The unfortunate Wolfe has been applying in vain this two years for leave.) 'This will be his discourse, and I must say, "My lord, you are very kind. But in July we may begin to shoot." Lord Bury likes that and so do I.' In another letter, after cursing the Highland weather, when 'one day we are shivering in greatcoats, and the next losing all the skin off our faces from the rays of the sun,' Wolfe goes on to say that his Irish cousin Goldsmith has sent him 'the finest young pointer that

ever was seen; he eclipses Workie and outdoes all.' The same relative, whose generosity by the way is not wholly above suspicion, sends in addition 'a fishing-rod and wheel of his own making. This, with a salmon-rod from my uncle Wat, your flies and my own gun, puts me in a condition to undertake the Highland sport in June, and to adventure myself amongst mountains, lakes, and wildest wastes.' Grouse-shooting in those days, it is curious to note, began in July. For on the 15th of the month, 1750, Wolfe writes: 'I went three days successively a-shooting in the hills from five in the morning till night. I never knew such fatigue; some amends were made us by the quantity of the game and the elegance of the sport, but I, who am a very bad shot, had an equal share of the labour and less of the entertainment.' It is only in keeping with the sentiment of his time, and of all time, indeed, prior to it, that Wolfe, though a cultured, thoughtful, and even romantic person, gives no sign of sensibility to the beauties of Highland scenery. That admiration for wild and sublime solitudes that the mass of educated mankind now feel, or think they feel, was a thing not yet conceivable. The fine air and the sport pleased Wolfe and his friends, but the mountains in themselves had no sort of attraction for them. Dread, repulsion, or at the best curiosity, were the feelings then inspired among Englishmen by the mountains of Wales and Scotland. 'A horrid spot of hills' is the best that can be said of Snowdonia in the early Georgian period. Captain Burt, who was quartered for a long time in the Highlands, road-making before the '45, is not merely silent regarding the beauty of the scenery, like Wolfe, but writes of it with a pious horror, and in one of his letters contrasts the forbidding dreariness of the Highland Alps with the charms and beauties of Richmond Hill! And the observant and talented Captain merely expresses here an opinion that every other civilised Southerner of his period would have expressed. What is more pertinent, however, to the subject in hand is his testimony to the unsportsmanlike fashion in which stags were hunted by the Highland chiefs of that time. The famous stag hunt with which Scott opens his 'Lady of the Lake' must, it is to be feared, be held as fanciful, for Burt, who lived among them about 1730, tells us that when venison was required it was the regular custom for an army of clansmen to beat the mountains and drive the deer before them into some corral or narrow place where they were easily slaughtered. Indeed a perusal of the industrious Captain's two volumes[1] tends to reduce the glorified

[1] Burt's 'Letters from the North.'

Highlander of modern ideas to somewhat sordid and at times unsavoury proportions. But this is straying from our subject. So far as Scotland is concerned, it only remains to be said that Wolfe makes frequent mention of woodcocks when no other game is to be had.

As he shakes, and somewhat joyously it is to be feared, the dust of Scotland off his feet, and marches south with the regiment through Lancashire, Wolfe takes note of the number of fox-hounds to be seen, and yet can hardly think the county a good one for hunting, owing to the stiffness of the enclosures and the amount of tillage. The girls, however, he thinks delightful to behold after the 'hard-favoured Scotch lassies.' But then he has been all these years in love with an English girl! The next shooting experiences Wolfe tells of are from his new quarters in Dover Castle, whence he sends his parents a present of some birds of his own killing. He apologises for their small dimensions, since they are but quail; 'a rarity at this season' (January). In the letter to his father accompanying the birds, our rigid disciplinarian and very real hero shows himself to be mortal, even to naïveté, regarding the pursuit of game. Indeed, he confesses himself a poacher in most unblushing fashion. 'I had a pheasant and partridges,' he writes, 'but these I dare not send, as we are not authorised by law to kill them, and as they examine strictly upon the great roads, I should be unwilling to be reputed a smuggler. It is a misfortune for a man that likes this sort of sport, preferable to any other, to be liable to law and a fine, or to be obstructed in the pursuit of a very innocent and wholesome diversion.' (This is delightful!) 'Over the water 'tis death to shoot without a license. Here 'tis prosecution, damages and costs.' According to the law of that period, an officer or soldier in garrison killing game without leave of the lord of the manor was fined five pounds, and if this was not paid within two days of demand after conviction he forfeited his commission. For the private soldiers committing such offences the commanding officer was mulcted in the amount of 20*s.* for each trespasser. When removed to Exeter, Wolfe seems to have had no shooting, which is not wonderful, seeing that the Devonshire squires were such ardent Jacobites, they would not even accept regimental hospitality much less show the colonel sport. But their women, Wolfe tells us, came to his dances fast enough. And Wolfe, it may be remarked, was a most ardent and enthusiastic promoter of dancing, and himself a good performer. He kept his subalterns rigidly up to the mark in this respect, holding the opinion that

it was a part of the duty of officers to dance, and that it promoted pleasant social feelings between the civil and military of a district, an important matter at that period. He succeeded, he declares, in 'dancing the regiment into the good graces of the Devonshire Jacobites,' and what a blessing, by the way, it would be for the young ladies in this degenerate age if there were a few colonels who shared Wolfe's sentiments in this respect! Yet it should be remembered that this was the man whose regiment was even then becoming celebrated as the best disciplined in the British army. The last we hear of Wolfe as a sportsman is at Stroud, whither he has been despatched to put down riots amid the Gloucestershire cloth-workers. He writes from there for his 'short gun' to be sent him; 'the one I use in woods.' He does not say very much about hunting, except that at one time the regiment kept a pack of hounds and that he was himself very fond of the sport. To racing he only once alludes, paying a visit to the Basingstoke meeting, where he 'had the pleasure of seeing the Duke of Bolton's horse win a plate.' He goes on to say that if he had been skilled in betting matters he could have won a hatful of money, for the local country gentlemen seemed to him 'to wager with more passion than judgment against the Duke's horse.' But the future conqueror of Canada had not much more time for such innocent diversions. His health, too, was deplorable, and the rest of his short life was to be devoted to the shooting of Frenchmen, not partridges, or in preparations for the first and more serious pursuit. In conclusion, it may be noted that Wolfe has a good deal to say of roads and posting in his correspondence. In one letter he talks of a terrible covered-in, two-wheeled post-chaise, which plied upon the road north of Durham. Some of us Moderns may be not unfamiliar with an unspeakable affair suggesting in appearance a private 'bus cut through the middle, that here and there even yet does the odd jobs of a country house. Some personal recollections of the treatment which a machine of this type was wont, even upon a flat macadam road, to mete out to its passengers, make Wolfe's fulminations as he travelled thus for days over the billowy mud tracks of the eighteenth century seem readily comprehensible. After sitting inside such a conveyance from the Scottish border well nigh to Inverness, one can imagine he indulges in no flowers of speech when he vows 'these Italian chaises seem purposely invented to torture unhappy carcases,' and describes himself as so bruised and beaten that, in despair, he got out and rode the harness horses by turns. This was even worse, for the

brutes fell by the way several times, and were so rough that he reached his destination 'beat to pieces, covered with blood, and in a fainting condition.' Such were the good old times before macadam.

It is a far cry from Wolfe to Washington. But when the former, at the age of twenty-three, and after seven more or less bloody campaigns, was taking for the first time to sport, the latter, junior by five years, had already been entered under curiously different conditions. Primogeniture and entail flourished in those days in Virginia. Washington was a second son and his patrimony was trifling. His elder brother Laurence, more than a dozen years his senior, was already in possession when George left school and went to live with him. Laurence had been educated in England, served in the Cartagena campaign, and had just built the now famous manor house of Mount Vernon on the banks of the Potomac. His neighbours were the Fairfaxes of Belvoir, and he had married a daughter of that well-known house. Now the English Fairfaxes had inherited vast tracts of land in Virginia, and George of that name had settled in the colony to look after the family interests. Hither, to Belvoir, soon came the head of the family, Lord Fairfax himself, aged sixty, Oxonian, guardsman, sportsman, scholar, courtier, man of fashion. All out of humour with the gay world in which he had played a conspicuous part, his lordship came to the forests of Virginia to end his days amid their romantic solitudes. But Belvoir was too civilised for such an inveterate recluse. He moved in course of time across the mountains, and in the valley of the Shenandoah, then scarcely touched, and in the centre of his primeval principality, he built Greenway Court. It was at Belvoir, however, that he and the boy George Washington grew such fast friends, and it was behind a pack of foxhounds this friendship was formed and cemented. Many wonderful stories of colt-breaking and suchlike are told of Washington's boyhood, and though in after years he was to do a deal of fox-hunting by the Potomac, at fifteen he had yet his way in life to make. This all the world knows he essayed to do, and with success, as a surveyor. Delimiting the vast Fairfax estates gave him a good start, and buried in at Greenway Court in the Alleghany forests with his friend, mentor and patron, the old hermit peer, he led an adventurous life of sport and hardy woodcraft. Mixing freely with the Indians and rough Scotch Irish hunters and settlers, he was learning invaluable lessons in sport and war, and gaining the experience which was to make him, while still a youth, easily the first soldier in Virginia. But keen as he was among the trappers

and hunters of the Alleghanies, there is no doubt that the note of horn and the cry of hound were of all sounds, and the comparatively tame pursuit of the fox of all sports, the dearest to his soul. His circumstances soon underwent a great change and brought him back to fox-hunting and civilisation. For his brother died and left him trustee of his estates and guardian of his daughter, whose early death put the still youthful uncle into possession of one of the finest properties in Virginia, which was greatly increased by his marriage later on with a rich widow. We have nothing to do with his soldiering against the French and Indians—a business, by the way, that he loved even more than fox-hunting. It is in the long lull rather, between the conquest of Canada and the Revolution, that Washington stands out most prominently as a country gentleman and a sportsman, for after the latter epoch his time was never again his own till too old, and too worried, and too famous to resume the quiet life he so loved. It is in this happiest period of his existence, as he always regarded it, between his twenty-fifth and fortieth year broadly speaking, that his life comes more particularly within the scope of this paper. A model and hardworking country gentleman in all respects, we find him breeding horses and hounds with as much method and care as he grew wheat and tobacco. A big man of six feet one, with long limbs and huge joints, square face and prodigiously firm mouth, he possessed in a high degree the gift of 'eloquent silence,' coupled with a capacity for enjoying the gaiety of those around him, and an immense talent for rural business. He had a perfect passion for out-of-door life. His biographers, being naturally bookish men, make efforts to endow him with something more than a toleration for books. But as a matter of fact Washington grudged every minute he spent in the house, except those with his account books, which were most accurately kept. He was not only the best soldier, but about the best farmer in the colony, and his physical strength was herculean. There is no evidence that, like Wolfe, he was fond of the gentle art, nor does he appear in middle life to have shot a great deal. But his hunting was conducted with a method and precision that must have been rare among the happy-go-lucky Virginian squires of that day, and yet he had never been in England, and was indeed a colonial of the fourth generation! His journals are full of hunting notes and he seems to have taken his hounds out three days in the week on an average during the best parts of the season. It was never the custom in Virginia to ride to hounds in the English sense of the word, the country being unsuitable, but rather to trust to such

knowledge of hunting and woodcraft as would enable the sportsman to watch his hounds—in which, indeed, his whole interest was centred. Washington, however, notoriously thorough in everything he did, is said to have ridden as near the tail of his pack as practicable. On this account he bred horses especially for hunting. Chinkling and Valiant, Ajax and Blueskin, are the names of some of them. He kept careful registers both of his horses and hounds; of the latter, Vulcan, Ringwood, Truelove, Music and Sweetlips, among many others, have had their names immortalised. It is said he bred and drafted them so carefully that on a hot scent you could cover them with a blanket; and this must have been a phenomenon indeed in Virginia, where I have some reason for knowing that a twenty-acre field would seldom, in the most ardent period of a run, include both the rear and van of the pack. Washington's hunting costume, we are told, was a blue coat, scarlet waistcoat, buckskin breeches and a velvet cap. It is quite certain that he rarely mixed his packs with those of his neighbours, as was the custom usually in Virginia, and indeed not seldom in England, for that matter. But the neighbouring squires were ready enough to come out and see his hounds run. His wife, too, occasionally made one of the party, clad in a scarlet habit. The native foxes were of the grey variety, greatly given to 'ringing,' but early in the century the sportsmen of Maryland just across the river had turned down the English red fox, which had bred and multiplied and bid defiance to all but the very best hounds of the country. Here are some scraps from Washington's journal for the year 1768:

'Went a hunting with Jacky Curtis and catched a fox after a three hours' chase; found it in a creek.' Again: 'Mr. Bryan Fairfax, Mr. Grayson and Phil Alexander came by sunrise. Hunted and catched a fox with them. Lord Fairfax, his brother, and Colonel Fairfax, all of whom, with Mr. Fairfax and Mr. Wilson of England, dined here.' 'Hunted again with same company; started a fox and run him seven hours.' 'Janry. 15.—Shooting. Janry. 16.—At home all day with the cards; it snowing. 23rd.—Rode to Muddy Creek and directed paths to be cut for fox-hunting. Febry. 12.—Catched two fox. Febry. 13.—Catched two more foxes. March 2.—Catched a fox with bob'd tail and cut ears after a seven hours' chase, in which most of the dogs were worsted.' Again: 'Hunted with Lord Fairfax and his brother; started a fox and lost it. Dined at Belvoir and returned in the evening.' Washington kept a kennel huntsman, a negro slave, of course, and we are told that his first act every morning

of his life when at home was to visit his stables and his kennels. Champion in later life of the high-sounding catchword that all men are born equal, whatever that may precisely mean, Washington had almost as many reservations on that point for private use as the best of conservatives, and among other things would stand no poaching. Now along the banks of the Potomac, where it washed his estate, large flocks of canvas-back ducks were wont to find a snug retreat during the winter. The temptation to encroach on the Mount Vernon preserves seems to have been altogether too great for one incorrigible vagabond, and neither Washington nor his people were able to catch him. One day, however, the intruder, thinking all was safe, fired off his gun into a flock of ducks while Washington himself was riding unbeknown in the neighbouring woods. The wrathful squire hearing the shot, and suspecting his friend the poacher was at work, rode straight to the spot, and arrived just as he was pushing out his canoe from the shore. Washington dashed into the river after the culprit, in spite of the gun the rascal levelled at him, seized the canoe, dragged it to the shore, and pulling its owner out upon the bank, gave him then and there the soundest of thrashings. It well may be believed, too, that the Father of his country treated the offender to some of that strenuous language that in the heat of passion he is always said to have been able to use with such effect. But Washington after all, like Wolfe, though of a different temperament, was a very perfect man from a wholesome point of view. He was a model country gentleman, kind to his slaves and dependents, an active and progressive farmer, and abundantly hospitable to his neighbours. Indeed, when he and his family do happen to dine alone he makes a special note of it in his diary, while in the hunting season he seems always to have had guests in the house. In one entry he complains that though there are a hundred cows on the place he has to buy butter! Of actual fighting he was prodigiously fond, but in the period 1760–74 the probability of such indulgence seemed to the colonial soldier very remote. Unlike Wolfe, he had no personal ambition, and loved the sports and pursuits of country life with a great passion. Even the high position to which he was called at the outbreak of war, with his long term in the Presidency at its close, never compensated him for the complete break it made in his old life. His farms ran down, his kennel was broken up, his outbuildings and fences fell into dilapidation. His fortune, too, was greatly reduced, and he would take no money from his country, as all the world knows. There is something almost pathetic in his last years of retirement at

Mount Vernon. Though all the world and his wife flocked there, and indeed threatened to eat him out of house and home, and though celebrities of all nations came to gather words of wisdom which might or might not fall from the lips of the Western Cincinnatus, the hero himself beyond a doubt looked back with a great yearning to the days when he 'went a hunting with Jacky Curtis,' and 'catched foxes with Lord Fairfax,' and made experiments in seed wheat or built improved tobacco-barns; or when the weather was impossible played cards and danced minuets, for which last innocent pastime, like Wolfe, he had a weakness. We had a glimpse of Wolfe upon his travels. It may not be amiss to close this brief sketch of Washington with a peep at the fashion in which he too in his days of comparative obscurity accomplished a long journey. Bad as the English roads were in those days, the highways of colonial America were infinitely worse. With a few exceptions in certain districts, people travelled solely on horseback. In 1756 Washington had occasion to ride to Boston, about 400 miles, to settle some matter connected with the militia of his colony, and here is a picture of him setting out from Mount Vernon. He was attired, we are told, in the buff and blue uniform of the colonial irregulars. He had a white and scarlet cloak over his shoulders and a sword knot of red and gold. His horse furniture was of the best London make, trimmed with livery lace, and the Washington arms were engraved upon the housings. By his side rode his two aides in buff and blue. Behind followed his servants in the Washington livery of white and scarlet, and wearing hats laced with silver. And it should be noted that at this time the great Republican of the future was simply a Virginia squire and a colonel of militia. He was a member in these early days of the Virginia Legislature, though a man of county business rather than a politician. But when he did go to the capitol at Williamsburg he seems to have much enjoyed himself, dining and dancing with his friends. Here, too, on the chief racecourse of the colony, he certainly on one occasion ran a horse, and its name was Magnolia, and he seems to have acted once at any rate in the capacity of judge. Whether in peace or war, Washington was always well mounted, and generally upon horses of his own breeding. Being one of the best horsemen in the colonies, it is not surprising to hear that his commanding figure showed to best advantage in the saddle. As for his hounds, there were plenty of Virginians half a century after his death—aye, and more too—who loved to boast that in their small, wiry, and in appearance rather degenerate stock, there coursed the blood of ancestors who had rallied to the horn and voice of the Father of his country.

TOFFY'S TRIUMPH

A TALE OF THE POLO FIELD

BY T. F. DALE

'You will have to play back in the final to-morrow, Toffy. Egerton is down with fever.'

'All right, but I should like to ride my own ponies,' and the speaker, Captain Vincent, of the Prince's Chestnuts, looked at the captain of his polo team with a beaming smile, which, with the imperturbable good temper of which it was the outward and visible sign, had won him the name of Toffy in the regiment.

'Yes, perhaps you had better,' answered Major Eustace, who had the cares of the coming struggle for the championship pressing heavily upon him. 'But——' and he looked at his companion doubtfully.

'But——' repeated the other. Then as Eustace flicked his boot hesitatingly with his riding whip · 'But you have doubts about the rider, I suppose you would say.'

The ready smile parted Toffy's lips as he spoke, and his grey eye looked full at Eustace.

The latter was clearly relieved. Good old Toffy, he never minded anything. And Eustace had to get the best he could out of his men for the morrow.

'Well, you know, Toffy, you would play very well if you wouldn't be so vain. Do play the game, there's a good fellow, and don't try to show off. Gallery play is all very well for a brilliant chap like Beaumont, though even he overdoes it, but you should try for something less, you know.'

So this was all Toffy's many advantages had brought him after ten years in the service. A close observer would have

noticed a slight compression about the lips that told of something deeper, under the smiling exterior, with which he carried off his senior's remark; for despite the surface gaiety with which Toffy met most of the events of life, he really cared very much about the opinion of his fellows, and under a pleasant though plain and somewhat ordinary exterior he concealed an ambitious and sensitive spirit.

He longed to be first, and he was nearly always second or third, or, as in the present case, fifth, for he was only reserve man in the polo team of his regiment. No one practised more than he, or took more pains, but though he was a very fair player indeed, he never got the credit for having left his early inefficiency behind him. If he did get a good run, it was generally set down as an attempt at gallery play, yet in polo he had meant to be first. He lavished large sums on his polo ponies, such as no other man in the regiment could dream of; but though his seniors and subalterns alike were proud to borrow from his stud, and even went into raptures over the delight of ten minutes on one of them, 'Poor old Toffy's' matchless ponies seemed to make him no whit better thought of even among the polo men. If they could form a team without him, his name never came up, and when they did turn to him, Toffy knew it was only because there was no one else. Yet what he desired most of all was to come to the front, to be brilliant and to be popular. He undervalued the gifts that he had, a level head and a kindly heart, and of the very substantial advantages of a deep and well-lined purse he thought nothing, while those qualities of mind and body which he had not seemed to him the only ones worth possessing.

Thus Toffy was his own worst enemy, for people took him at his own valuation. Even his money did not seem to have the same value as that of others. If he gave more than any three combined to one of the regimental objects, it seemed that the others conferred a favour on him by accepting it; and when, as more than once happened, out of sheer kindness of heart he spent a substantial sum in getting a graceless subaltern out of a difficulty, the youngster accepted it with a kindly patronising, 'Good old Toffy, he will never miss it.'

So without taking a profound view of the mysteries of life, or wandering into metaphysical speculations as to their causes, Toffy felt and wondered at the injustice of mankind, without in the least realising that he was the author of his own misfortunes. But he wondered if for him there was any way out of so unsatisfactory a state of things.

Now he was to play in the polo team, but he owed the promotion to accident and not to his own right of place. He was there only as a makeshift, and no one thought of concealing his belief that the absence of the man he replaced was an irreparable disaster. Poor old Toffy never minded, so there was no need to consider *his* feelings in the matter; and even his own subaltern, with whom he chummed, made irreverent jokes on the undeserved preferment given to his superior.

But nothing moved Toffy's anger more than the praise of a young gunner, who was the soul of the team the Chestnuts were to meet.

Fred Beaumont had the good looks Toffy craved for and lacked. He had a superficial brilliancy, that seemed to Toffy's slower moving mind as the quintessence of wit, and he had the frank belief in himself which gave others faith in him. All looked upon him as the 'promising young officer' the papers called him, when he got his D.S.O. in Egypt. He was tall and slight in figure, while Vincent was short and too square of shoulder for grace. He had passed first into the shop and first out, while Vincent had been thankful to get into the service anyhow. Everything came easily to him. He had passed the higher proficiency in languages which would never be of the smallest use to him, because he wanted money, and to get the Government reward was the easiest way of earning it. Above all, he was one of the finest polo players in India, and though the gunners seldom have a really first-class team owing to their frequent changes, Beaumont had begged, bullied, and persuaded the men of the two batteries at Fatipur to give fairly regular practice, and he had schooled them and mounted them, and finally, by the aid of his own brilliant play, he had worked them into the final of the cavalry tournament, and now he intended to win the Cup. But he was in love, and therefore, like Toffy, he was for once at a disadvantage. He had, in fact, everything that Toffy lacked, except money, and, though the latter did not know this, a well-balanced moral nature. There was a suspicion of sharp practice about some of Beaumont's actions that made people rather shy in their dealings with him; and though all were ready to praise his polo and his horsemanship, and the 'go' which made him so valuable an ally in any station or regimental undertaking, few had for him the kindly feeling which prompted them to turn to Toffy when things were going badly.

There had long been a tacit rivalry between the two men, for Beaumont realised to the full the advantage Toffy's money was

to him, while the latter envied the social success of the young gunner. And latterly the unexpressed rivalry had become open and undisguised, for both the brilliant artilleryman and the smiling young hussar were candidates for the favour of the beauty of Fatipur.

But to healthy men about to play in the final of a great tournament even love is not all-engrossing, and the next morning Toffy spent a pleasant time looking over his ponies with Major Eustace, and discussing the almost endless topic which of them he should play, and in what order. At last, as the two men turned from the stables, Toffy's last instructions were given him by his captain:

'Now, Toffy, what you can do is to hit backhanders, and mind you hit 'em hard, and don't be up to any idiocy that will put the ball right among the other side. Remember you have Beaumont against you, and he's not a fellow to let an opportunity slip.'

Toffy listened with his usual smiling good temper, but as he passed into his bungalow he thought bitterly:

'If Beaumont's lot win, everyone will say it is because I am playing in Egerton's place. The only satisfaction is'—and a grim little smile added the strength to his face that it sometimes seemed to lack—'they will all declare he would have been beaten if the original teams had met.'

But for once Toffy meant to do himself justice and show what he could do when he tried. Beaumont should not have the triumph of winning the tournament on which Toffy knew he had set his heart. He, Toffy, would for once withstand him and wrest the victory from him. Would this be any balm to his feelings if the gunner's engagement to Susan Cumming was announced, for like everyone else in the station Toffy thought this was sure to come.

For when he had once tried to lead up to the momentous question himself, Miss Cumming had laughed aside his tender speeches, and left him in a state of depression from which, as regarded her, he had never rallied.

Yet, as he got himself out of his uniform, he determined to drive over early to the polo ground, and to let Miss Cumming know from his own lips he was to take part in the great struggle that was arousing the attention of all India. If he should win, would it give him any advantage in her eyes? Women always like a man to succeed, and Toffy had heard Miss Cumming speak with enthusiasm of Beaumont's long run of almost unbroken success.

So while the February sun was still high in the heavens, Toffy, to the consternation of his bearer, ordered his polo kit and his dogcart, and set out for the polo ground a full hour before the match was timed to begin.

His bearer followed his movements with wonder, for worthy Eli Bux could see that his master had something on his mind. At last the overcoat was donned, and Toffy stood lighting a long cheroot on the verandah before he gathered up the reins and stepped lightly to his place. At least, there was no turn-out to touch his in Fatipur, and Toffy ran a critical eye over the mare, which could cover her ten miles an hour without the appearance of turning a hair in the performance. The cart and harness were both bright, and not unworthy of the well-bred mare which had cost the owner an almost fabulous sum at the beginning of the cold weather. No makeshift Cawnpore harness disfigured Toffy's horses, and he thought with satisfaction that no one, from the General downwards, could boast of such a faultlessly correct turn-out as he owned.

So he bowled along merrily for the station polo ground, which lay some two miles from his bungalow; but though he looked as light-hearted and as well pleased with the world and his own place in it as ever, in truth care sat heavy upon him. On that afternoon's play depended his future, for if he failed, Beaumont would win more even than the challenge trophy, and Toffy swore he would never stay to see his double triumph. Should he take a year's leave, or should he leave the service altogether and settle down as his father's right hand in the management of his newly acquired estate at home? On these things Toffy pondered, till the sight of the commissioner's heavy barouche, drawn by two fat walers, on the road in front of him gave a new turn to his thoughts.

The scarlet liveries, like the walers, had evidently seen service, but what cared Toffy for smartness now, if only Susan's bright eyes might give him a greeting as he passed! Gathering himself together, he caught hold of the mare, and sent her along at a pace that made the syce in his turn wonder what ailed the sahib.

As he reached the carriage Toffy received a gracious bow from Mrs. Cumming, and a friendly smile from her daughter, and he thought with satisfaction that Beaumont for once would be out of the way, as he would be too much taken up with his men at the last moment to have time to look after their guests.

By the time the barouche drew up in front of the guest-tent, Toffy, with his usual seraphic smile, was standing beside the S.S.O.,

and as the latter handed out Mrs. Cumming with a solemnity fitted to the stately proportions of that somewhat awe-inspiring matron, he was ready to assist the belle of Fatipur. Susan Cumming was sufficiently beautiful to have been a *belle* anywhere. Tall and graceful, with dark hair and eyes and a creamy-white complexion, she was a maiden who would have made her mark among a bevy of London beauties. No wonder then that at Fatipur she carried all before her, and besides her sworn henchmen, Beaumont and Toffy, there was not a subaltern in the station who had not lost his heart to her. Then Toffy confided to her that he was to take Major Egerton's place in the Chestnut team.

'Oh, how nice!' was the artless rejoinder, as Miss Cumming turned her lustrous brown eyes on him in a way that made his colour rise and his heart beat quicker. 'How I hope you will win!'

But even as the words fell on Toffy's delighted ears, he saw Beaumont come swiftly across from a group of men and ponies at the side of the ground, and greeting Miss Cumming with his usual air of masterful assurance, bore off the beauty.

For once Toffy's smile deserted him, and he stalked off gloomily to find his syce, and gave vent to his feelings by finding fault with all that appertained to his work with the ponies.

Then came the time to start, and the wide bare expanse of sand that formed the station polo ground at Fatipur was surrounded by spectators. There were soldiers from the great white barracks, which had been the lurking-place of fever and cholera for more than a generation. There, too, were civilians from the civil station that almost adjoined the ground, and natives of all ranks and classes who had gathered to see the play of Englishmen.

Far away in the guest-tent, Toffy could see Miss Cumming's graceful figure, beside the bright-hued portly form of her mother, which was a landmark from any part of the ground.

The two teams were on the ground, and most of the men were busy knocking the balls about. Beaumont was there, alert and smart as usual, and as Toffy's eye fell on him, a sudden impulse seized him to have one last word with Susan Cumming before play began.

He caught hold of his pony and galloped over to the tent.

Miss Cumming was evidently pleased to see him, and under the influence of the friendly look she turned on him, Toffy's resentment at her desertion died away, as it always did in her presence.

'Oh, Captain Vincent, I do hope you will win!' she said in

her rich, rather deep voice, which to her listener was the sweetest music in the world. 'Why, you are riding my favourite, Judy—and are you going to have Guardsman out?'

'Yes,' returned Toffy; 'we all bring out our best to-day, and I hope, Miss Cumming, you *will* see us win. Do you mean that I may carry away your good wishes for our success?'

Miss Cumming raised her eyes frankly, but her glance wavered as it met his, and her tone was lower and softer than he ever heard it, as she answered:

'Yes, you have my best wishes. Do not disappoint me.'

'You may be sure I will do my best,' and, turning, Toffy quickly gained his place.

Then rose a cloud of dust, and the thud of the ponies' hoofs rang out from the hard ground. Not inaptly has polo on an Indian ground been described as a 'cloud of dust and a few bad words in the middle of it.'

Toffy carried out his instructions of keeping well back. Judy, the dark-brown waler mare of which Miss Cumming had expressed her admiration, was a wonder at the game, though she was perhaps a trifle long in the back. According to the arrangement made with Eustace that morning, Toffy was to ride her in the first and last 'chuckers.'

'Now mind,' were the captain's last words to his back, as the trumpeter sounded the assembly; 'whatever you do, don't let Beaumont slip you at the start.'

'Right you are,' was the cheery response; but alas, Toffy's eyes wandered to the guest-tent at the very moment when the umpire threw in, and the first thing he was conscious of was that Beaumont was flying past him with the ball.

Toffy sat down to ride, but he knew it was all but hopeless to attempt to catch the flying figure on the bay Arab, nor was Beaumont likely to miss.

Even then Toffy noted the perfect seat and the easy grace with which Beaumont was hitting, now on the near and now on the off-side, leaving the ball after each stroke in a more favourable position for the posts.

Judy, however, was going like the wind, and every stride brought her nearer to the Arab. In a moment more Toffy might be able to crook Beaumont's stick and save the goal.

But as the sound of Judy's feet on the sandy ground reached Beaumont's ears, he knew the danger that impended. Toffy saw him take a look at the posts, which, though still a long way off, were straight in front.

'DO YOU MEAN THAT I MAY CARRY AWAY YOUR GOOD WISHES FOR OUR SUCCESS?'

No one knew better than Beaumont the value to his side of a goal at the start. As Toffy with outstretched arm strove to intercept the blow, the ball shot forward from a clean sharp contact of the mallet head, and Toffy knew he was to pay the full penalty of his momentary inadvertence. Up rose the ball in the air as it neared the posts, and Toffy closed in to ride Beaumont off at the moment it dropped within a yard of the goal.

The two men rode each other off desperately, and behind them came the other players at full stretch.

'Go it, Toffy! Well saved!' cried Eustace, as Beaumont tried in vain to get another stroke at the ball. Whichever way he turned Toffy was on him, and not all his skill could shake him off.

But the ball was still moving, rolling slowly towards the posts, and neither of the men could reach it. At last it trickled over the line and a wild shout arose from the gunners as the first score of the match went up to their credit.

As they rode back to the middle of the ground all Eustace said was:

'I thought, Toffy, Judy was a bit faster than the bay.'

'And so she is,' was the reply, 'but Beaumont slipped me.'

'Well, old man, you did your best to catch him,' for Eustace was much too wise to depress one of his men at the beginning of the match.

After that Toffy played a very excellent game. He never let the ball pass him, and his back-handers were hard, clean, and well placed. In vain the gunners tried to break down his defence. In vain their No. 1 bumped him. Toffy only smiled and hit the ball all the same.

At last came his chance. Beaumont was running the ball down the ground, and it seemed as if another goal was imminent. But Toffy bided his time. He was riding a country-bred mare that could fly for a quarter of a mile, though she pulled hard except in a galloping game. Now the pace made her steady and she was on her best behaviour. She knew, too, that her master meant to go.

The ball shot alongside them from behind and Toffy cut it underneath the pony right across the goal. The little mare heard the crack of the stick and saw the flash of white out of the corner of her eye. She swung round, her ears back, and away she stretched in pursuit of the ball. Swinging of her own accord as she reached it, she gave Toffy a clear right-handed stroke, and thus they were embarked on a run down the side of the ground.

Toffy hit with the kind of inspiration that comes now and then at polo, as if he could not miss, and the mare seemed to know his thoughts.

'Go on!' shouted Eustace, playing No. 3 as he dropped back. 'Ride your men!' and the well-trained Chestnut forwards closed on to Beaumont and his back, who in vain struggled to escape, while Toffy hit the ball all he knew.

'Well done, Captain Vincent!' he heard as he flew past the tent, and once more Susan Cumming was nearly his undoing.

He nearly missed and had to hit twice in quick succession. Then he tipped the ball slightly and it flew to his left front. Now Toffy was not very good at near side strokes, and Eustace's language was expressive as he saw what had happened. But Toffy surpassed himself. Crack came his stick on the ball straight and true, and away it flew exactly in the right direction. There was now an angle shot at goal, not really difficult, but one of the most effective in the game. Once more Toffy was ready, and as the bell rang for half time, the ball flew through the posts. Toffy and Beaumont had each scored a goal for their side.

Now Toffy tasted the joy of gratified ambition.

'Well done, old Toffy!' 'By Jove, Toffy, you did that well!' and similar remarks filled the air, the only drawback to Toffy's happiness being the exclamation of his Colonel, 'By Gad, Vincent, I had no idea you could play like that.' This brought back to Toffy for a moment his feeling of impotent striving against the fate of mediocrity.

But even Eustace believed in him now, and Toffy realised that at last he had made his mark.

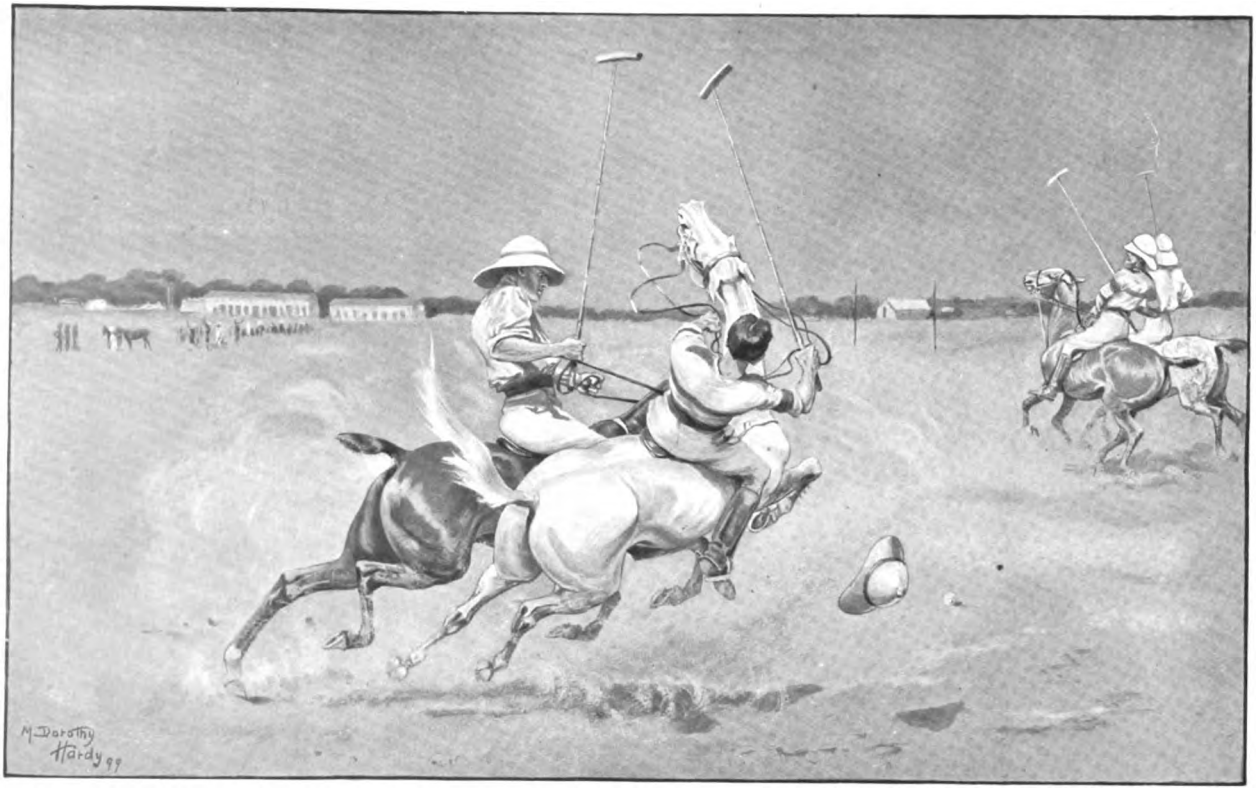
'Egerton's no loss to us, old man,' Eustace said, 'if you can play like that. Why, you are brilliant and steady too.'

Toffy cast a wistful glance across at the tent, and as he did so he found Beaumont was watching him with a half-smile on his lips.

The real tussle had still to come, but Toffy felt a determination hot within him that not even Beaumont's scorn should cool.

When play was resumed, both sides were a little tired and the men played carefully. Until the very last period the score remained at one all. Then Beaumont, who had been playing in every place in his team, and had carried the fortunes of his side almost single-handed, began to press. Once he narrowly missed the Chestnuts' goal, and Toffy had to hit behind to save it.

Time drew on. Then Beaumont once more got on to the ball and began to carry it in masterly style down the ground.



A CRY OF 'FOUL!' ROSE FROM THE RANKS OF THE GUNNERS

Toffy, who was again on Judy, could not hope to catch him fairly. A tempest of rage and disappointed hope surged within him, and his fair face was suffused with a crimson stain, while in his eyes shone a light that was akin to madness.

Just then the umpire's pony crossed its legs and came down.

Before it was up there was a crash, and a cry of 'foul' rose from the ranks of the gunners.

No one knew how the accident had happened. Beaumont was lying on the ground under his pony and Toffy was standing by him. The pony soon picked itself up and galloped off, but Beaumont did not move. Toffy, as he stood gazing at the white face on the ground, looked as if he himself had been turned to stone.

The match was stopped and the doctors took possession of the sufferer.

The men grouped themselves outside the mess-tent and waited for the verdict.

Soon it came. 'Concussion, serious, I fear, and leg broken in two places;' and those near Toffy heard him give a long-drawn sigh, that was almost a sob, as he turned and strode rapidly away.

No one stopped him, though the match still stood unfinished. But Toffy had apparently forgotten all about it.

Then the major of Beaumont's battery, after a short consultation with the team, decided to scratch, and the Chestnuts had won an inglorious victory.

That night Toffy's place was vacant at mess, and when the doctor came from his last visit to Beaumont's bungalow, he was startled by the haggard face that suddenly appeared from the shade, and for a moment he wondered who it was that demanded news in such urgent tones.

'Oh, Vincent, is it you? Look here, my good fellow. Whatever happens it's not your fault, and we hope he may pull through. Everyone knows that pony of Beaumont's is a dangerous brute, and if fellows will ride such animals in a fast match, why they know they take their lives in their hands in doing so.'

But Toffy seemed as if he did not hear.

'Will he live?' he demanded in a strange, hard tone.

Dr. Fletcher shook his head.

'Impossible to say, but I do not by any means say there is no hope.'

'Oh, Captain Vincent, is that you?' said a voice that caused Toffy's white face to turn a shade more ghastly still. 'We thought we would inquire about poor Mr. Beaumont. How sad

for you! but then you know accidents will happen, and'—with a look into Toffy's eyes that caused him the supreme agony of his life—'we thought at first it was you.'

As soon as Beaumont was declared out of danger Toffy took a year s leave, and it soon became known that he was trying for an exchange into a regiment at home.

So Fatipur knew him no more, and it was many years before Susan Cumming learned the reason of his sudden departure.

'NIMROD'

BY ERNEST BELLECROIX

(Editor of the 'Chasse Illustrée')

In my long career as a sportsman I have met with many interesting characters; one of the most striking was that of my old friend Gerard, the boar-hunter.

Richly endowed by nature, Gerard had received by birth all moral and physical gifts, except one—beauty. To be truthful, I must admit that Gerard was not an Adonis. His rough face, bristly hair and moustache, large mouth, thick, short neck, heavy shoulders and massive arms and legs, did not give him exactly a pleasing appearance, and had earned for him among his intimates the nickname of 'Le Père Sanglier.' His large grey eyes, however, were a redeeming feature, for in them could be read the loyalty of his character. Kind-hearted to a fault, frank and straightforward, ever ready to be useful, even to strangers, invariably cheerful, though never seen to laugh, always good-tempered, and the keenest of the keen. He was the prototype of a true sportsman. Gerard, like most exceptional men, disdained all weak social prejudices, and led an existence of his own, which could only please a man of his stamp. He had no enemies, and but few could count themselves his intimate friends; and those, it is almost needless to say, were all sportsmen.

Gerard's home, known by the name of 'La Sauvagère,' was situated in one of our central counties; the house, surrounded by a small park, of about twenty hectares, where little else than rabbits thrived, was unlike any other I have ever seen. From hall to attic the walls were covered with sporting trophies, but Gerard would never consent to decorate his home with birds or beasts laid low by any shot but his own. Horns and stuffed heads were to be seen everywhere, from boars to squirrels, from the royal stag to the rabbit, from the golden eagle to the speckled magpie, from the black-cock to the modest little quail, from the common sheldrake to the water-rail—all birds and animals worthy a sportsman's shot were represented in this temple, dedicated by our Nimrod to the great Saint Hubert.

But this marvellous collection was not all. In living under this hospitable roof one discovered, in the smallest objects, indications of the ruling passion of Gerard's life.

Tell me, friendly reader, however ardent a sportsman you may be, have you ever smoked your Havana in a cigar-holder cut out of boar's teeth? Is the fruit on your table served in baskets made of the horns of one-year-old roebuck? Are your curtains trimmed with the breast feathers of all sorts of duck? Have you ever thought of having bars of your chairs made from the legs of deer, or little garden stools from their ribs? Are your gloves, caps, and shooting jackets made of fox-skins? Sitting in front of a good fire in the evening, do you replace boots by slippers of wolf-skin? Have you a collection of those pretty candlesticks that Landseer's brush has immortalised, the foot of which is composed of the open claws of the great eagle, or of the screech-owl? I make no mention of the carpets, door-hangings, whips, panoplies, tobacco-pouches, cigarette-holders, dog-collars, &c. &c.; for if I were to enter into all those details I should never have finished.

At the opening of the season, shooting was restricted to the fields with dogs, for Gerard could bring down a partridge as surely as he could roll over a boar; but after the 19th of October the fields were abandoned for the woods, where, as opportunity offered, roebuck, deer, or boars, and sometimes even a wolf, were attacked, though Gerard always gave the preference to boars.

Shooting in the fields does not need either the same science or the same skill as does shooting in the woods. In the first case you have before you a large open space; you know, when your dog is pointing, where your game will rise; you follow it and only bring your gun to your shoulder when at a fair range. In

the woods it is quite another thing. Game often appears when least expected, and disappears as quickly; consequently more promptness and more practice are required. I have known many an excellent shot in the field to be very much at sea (pardon the Irishism) in the wood, as the following authentic anecdote will prove.

In the beginning of September, 18—, we—Gerard and myself—had been invited to a shooting-box for the opening day in the Beauce, that beautiful province so rich in the vast plains that seem to be the true home of partridges. The party was very select, only a few of the best shots having been invited. Among these was a certain Mr. R——, a great amateur sportsman, and a very amiable companion, who was, as everyone admitted, the best shot in the country; and certainly he brought down partridges in a very remarkable way—I should say almost as well as Gerard, if that were possible. An excellent sportsman, with much nerve and ardour, and a good dose of *sangfroid*, I do not think it would be possible to find any fault with him, except a little too much vanity with regard to his skill.

'You have no boars here,' said Gerard to him the same evening at dinner. 'Come and spend a week or so in December at the "Sauvagère," and we will give you an opportunity to shoot some.'

My friend's proposal was accepted willingly, and towards the end of November, Mr. R——, accompanied by two of his friends, both as inexperienced as himself at boar-hunting, arrived at the 'Sauvagère,' where I had been staying for the last week.

I have already said that the house was situated in the middle of a small park, at the end of this was a good-sized plain, and then the forest. I do not know exactly how many millions of hectares this magnificent forest contained, but I am acquainted with few others in France as wild or as dense, or better adapted for hiding in their thickets the game that sportsmen never find too numerous

Besides the 1,200 hectares allotted to him, Gerard had the right of hunting on the grounds of his neighbour, the Duke of M——, and Marcassin, Gerard's whipper-in, might take his hounds either on to his master's ground or into the surrounding woods, according to where the boars were marked.

We were five sportsmen at the 'Sauvagère': Mr. R——, his two friends, Gerard and myself. The evening of their arrival we were sitting in the dining-room, smoking and making plans for

the morrow. 'We shall have a good day of it, gentlemen,' said Gerard, 'and I can almost promise you, Mr. R——, that you will not fail to make acquaintance with our boars; the woods are full of them.'

'That is what I count upon, my dear host; and I reckon also that I shall receive them in the right way,' answered Mr. R——, with a smile of self-satisfaction.

'I hope so also, and nothing could be more agreeable to me,' replied Gerard; 'but you will allow an old hunter to give you advice. You have never seen a boar?'

'No.'

'Well, it is possible that you will be slightly surprised if one rushes past you unawares. Great promptness and decision are necessary. The opportunity to shoot is here and is gone in the same moment. The least hesitation and all is lost. The rascals have a hard skin too.'

'No need to be anxious on that score,' replied Mr. R——. 'No need at all.'

'All the better, all the better. And now, gentlemen, I wish you good-night. Don't disturb yourselves, stay as long as you like; but you know the order—to-morrow, at the first note of the horn, everyone out of bed.' And Gerard, after a friendly shake of the hands, retired. We chatted another half-hour and then followed his example.

I was sleeping soundly next morning when a formidable blast of Marcassin's horn made me leap out of bed.

An hour later, after a comfortable breakfast, we were driving away towards the forest. Mr. R——, his two friends, and myself in the carriage, Gerard and Marcassin on horseback, the latter being followed by seven couples of beautiful *Batards de Poitou*. In France, all 'pack hounds' which are a production of a cross with English fox-hounds are known by the name of *Batards*—(Bastards)—as, for example, *Batards de Saintonge*, *Batards de Poitou*, or Anglo-Normands, Anglo-Saintongeois, &c., to designate animals born of French thoroughbreds (*pur sang*), of Saintonge, of Poitou, of Normandy, &c. crossed by fox-hounds of English breeds.

The meet was some five kilometres from the 'Sauvagère.' We soon arrived, and Gerard gave orders to Marcassin, who immediately disappeared, accompanied by the dogs. We place ourselves in the posts assigned to us by Gerard, who, with horn over his shoulder and gun at his saddle, rode off at a little distance and rather behind us.

'YOU WILL NOT FAIL TO MAKE ACQUAINTANCE WITH OUR BOARS; THE WOODS ARE FULL OF THEM'

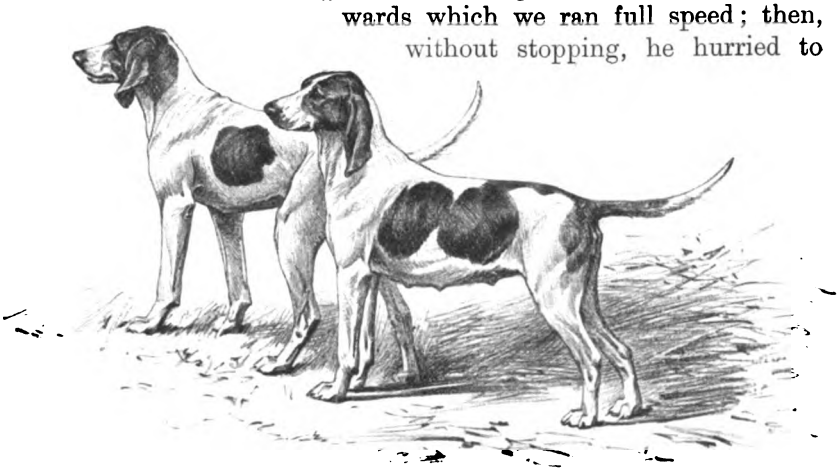
A few moments later the dogs begin to bark. 'Attention,' the 'Rapprocher' is about to begin.

'A roebuck!' called out Gerard, in a voice that is heard all down the alley. The concert becomes grand, the fourteen give tongue lustily. Steady, the game is up!

Here are the dogs. Listen to their music! How they crowd! The whole pack could be covered with a net.

Well, what has happened? The pack, giving tongue loudly, rush between Mr. R—— and his neighbour. The roebuck has been allowed to pass without a single shot being fired.

I heard a low grunt, and then Gerard, placed quite at the other end of the line, still on horseback, galloped past me and my neighbour, directing us to another post, towards which we ran full speed; then, without stopping, he hurried to



HAUT-POITOU HOUNDS

Mr. R—— just as Marcassin appeared. I see him leave the chase at his master's order and disappear with Mr. R—— and his friend in an opposite direction to that taken by us; he is going to post them elsewhere.

All this was done in a few seconds.

We were to meet at the 'Coupes Noires,' towards which Gerard, who of course knew the forest thoroughly, was manœuvring to send the roedeer—not an easy business, you may believe. When we were at our posts the chase was far off, and we could only with difficulty, and occasionally, distinguish the distant baying of the pack.

All at once we hear the far-off *fanfare*, the flourish of the trumpet, the signal for roedeer. Marcassin, just arrived,

explains to us that his master, having made a wide circuit, had forced the deer to turn back, and was sending it to the 'Coupes Noires.'

'You don't know my master, gentlemen,' said honest Marcassin; 'if he sends him, he must come.'

And indeed it is so. From my post I can perceive in front of us, on a hill from which we are separated by a ravine covered with brushwood, the white coats of the dogs who pass, all huddled up together, through the bushes; they descend towards the bottom of the valley and up again to the 'Coupes Noires.' Here they are, close to us—'Attention!'

Luck is on Mr. R——'s side again. I see him raise his gun quickly to his shoulder and take aim, his gun describing a half circle in the direction taken by the deer; a shot is fired.

'Dead?' asks some one.

No answer.

The dogs come up, rush through the line and . . . the chase continues.

Ten minutes after, Gerard arrived in his turn; he has had a rough race, for drops of perspiration spot here and there the brilliant skin of his indefatigable horse.

'Diable! Gentlemen, no luck, it appears, to-day. Who shot?'

'Mr. R——.'

'Hum!' growled our Nimrod, who did not like long sentences. It was the only way in which he ever allowed himself to criticise a shot.

After that he galloped away in the direction of the chase. Shortly after a sharp crack of the gun was heard, the *hallali* fanfare (death whoop).

The roebuck was down. Gerard, having had enough of it, and fearing that the chase would last too long, had thought best to put an end to it himself.

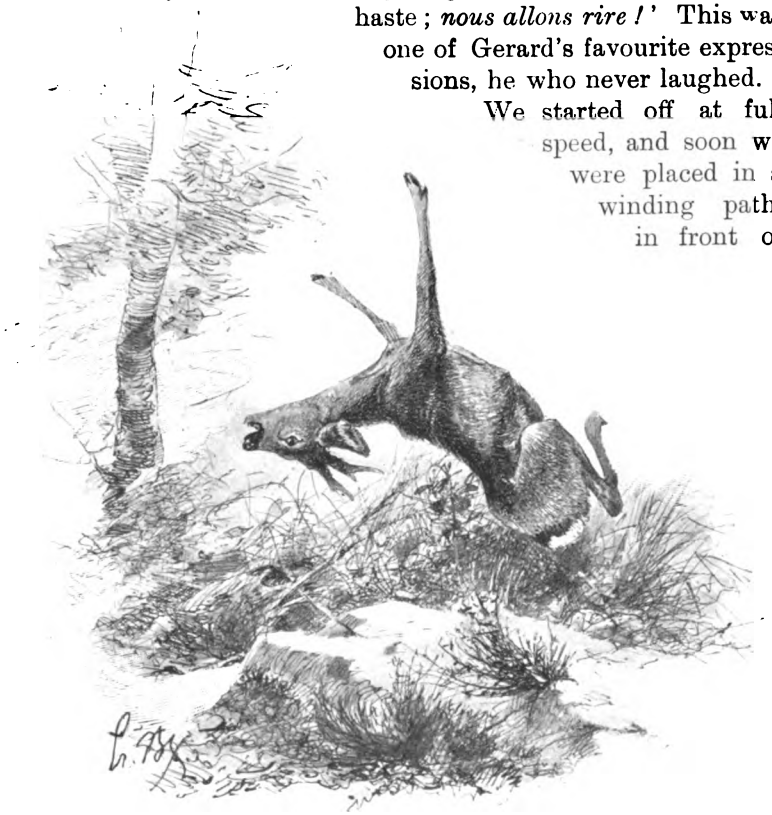
Mr. R—— appeared much vexed with his misfortunes, and pleaded extenuating circumstances.

'Anyone may miss a deer,' said Gerard laconically. 'You must take your revenge.'

A few minutes later, after having emptied our glasses and taken some light refreshment, we got into the carriage again and drove off to the other end of the forest, to a vast thicket of brambles and thorns alternating with the damp swamps of which the boar is particularly fond.

We had scarcely arrived, when the dogs who followed Marcassin put their noses to the ground and sniffed away as best

they could. Nothing escaped Marcassin's notice. Jumping off his horse, he found in the grass traces quite fresh. Gerard, on being consulted, did not hesitate an instant. 'They have not been gone an hour,' he said. 'Marcassin, don't loose the dogs for another twenty minutes. And you, gentlemen, *en avant:* make haste; *nous allons rire!*' This was one of Gerard's favourite expressions, he who never laughed. We started off at full speed, and soon we were placed in a winding path, in front of



THE ROEBUCK WAS DOWN

the very dense thicket of brambles and bracken, from among which rocky ledges, all covered with moss, cropped up here and there. Just the place for boars. The dull weather, the thickness of the cover, the narrow path—all rendered this part of the forest very dismal.

'They must be in there, a whole herd of them,' said Gerard. 'It is not necessary for me to advise you to be prudent. Don't move when you are once placed.'

Having shown each of us his place, he approached the ravine. I was the last of the line; for a moment I heard the stones

rolling under the horses' feet, and then I looked about me, bent only upon examining my surroundings, as every sportsman should do who is anxious to send a bullet into his game and not into a tree or his neighbour's ribs.

On my right hand was a thicket of thorn bushes, with patches of high ferns; on my left, a rock about forty feet long and nine feet high formed a gentle slide down into the wood. All at once we heard the pack that Marcassin had slipped on the scent. The sound, distant at first, was advancing rapidly; then a halt was made, easily to be understood. The boars, barricaded in an impenetrable thicket, could not be induced to leave it. The sound of Marcassin's horn, repeated by the echoes, filled all the corners of the valley. At last the animals, having been roused, made straight for that part of the forest where we were posted.

The moment was intensely exciting; with bated breath and beating heart, finger on the trigger, I waited. The chase was a little to my right, and was going on with great rapidity.

I heard the report of a gun, then a second, then a third. I turned round to see what was passing, and noted, about a hundred yards behind the line, the high ferns broken down, the young branches flying in all directions under the feet of a number of boars who had passed the line and were rushing with all speed towards the ravine; the next moment the dogs arrived, and the chase continued.

However, two or three dogs have stayed in the thicket and are barking loudly. This time it seems that chance will really favour me, and that the chase is coming to my side; but all at once it goes off to the left into the swampy moor in the direction taken by Gerard. A gun shot is heard, then all is silent; but only for a moment, for the chase begins again, and this time there is no mistake about its coming towards me. I can distinctly hear the branches cracking under the weight of a powerful brute. Suddenly an enormous boar comes galloping up the rock on my left, his immense head is visible, then his huge body. Oh! grand St. Hubert, *merci!* But before I could bring my gun to my shoulder the beast's knees waver, and he strikes against a stone, his huge head falls on one side, and, dragging the body with it, the boar rolls over the rock and falls twenty paces from me, breaking everything round it in its heavy descent.

'Have you got anything?' Gerard asked me, coming up at that moment, whilst I was contemplating the animal.

'Yes,' I said, 'I have a boar.'

I SAW A HUGE BOAR ROLL OVER

Ah! very good. I too have got one, I think; but here are the dogs again. *Après, mes beaux, après.*'

'No, here is your boar,' I said; 'it is the one I have got.'

He smiled, and looking at his victim said, 'He is a fine fellow; but over there, what have they killed?'

'I don't know. Marcassin is with the dogs.'

We found our comrades standing round Mr. R——, who, with a loud but rather uncomfortable laugh, as soon as he saw Gerard, exclaimed, 'This time, sir, I saw nothing; I found myself all at once surrounded by a pack of black devils, leaping from right to left, rushing along like bulls. I sent my two bullets, I don't know where; but I know my business, my apprenticeship is finished.'

'By this time the game is on the other side of the wood,' continued Gerard. 'It is past two o'clock. We may still kill a boar or so, but we shall have to be sharp. Will anyone take my horse?'

As no one accepted this proposal, we continued our march; but the dogs were so much in advance that it was impossible to rejoin them, and we returned to the 'Sauvagère' without news of Marcassin.

It was only towards nine o'clock in the evening that he arrived to give his master the result of his pursuit. The boars had gone off so far that it had been impossible to fire at them; it was six o'clock when the eleven dogs who had followed the herd had stopped a *bête de compagnie* who was separated from the others. The evening was so dark that it would have been imprudent to make use of the gun, so the animal had been finished with the knife. One dog only was slightly wounded.

That made for the day two boars and a roebuck.

The next day nothing worthy of note happened. Marcassin killed a fox and I a roebuck. The boars could not be roused, but the following morning, on arriving in the woods, we were not a little surprised to see Marcassin, who had left before daybreak, sitting on the border of a ditch, seemingly in deep conversation with a peasant. 'It is you, Braco, is it?' said Gerard, in answer to the peasant's good-day; 'what's happened, Marcassin?'

'Master,' answered Marcassin, 'Braco has just seen a whole herd of boars go into the woods of the *Petit Marais*, and I thought we might as well go for these as any others.'

'There are twenty-five of them at least, Monsieur Gerard,' added Braco; 'I saw them go off, and, not an hour ago, they

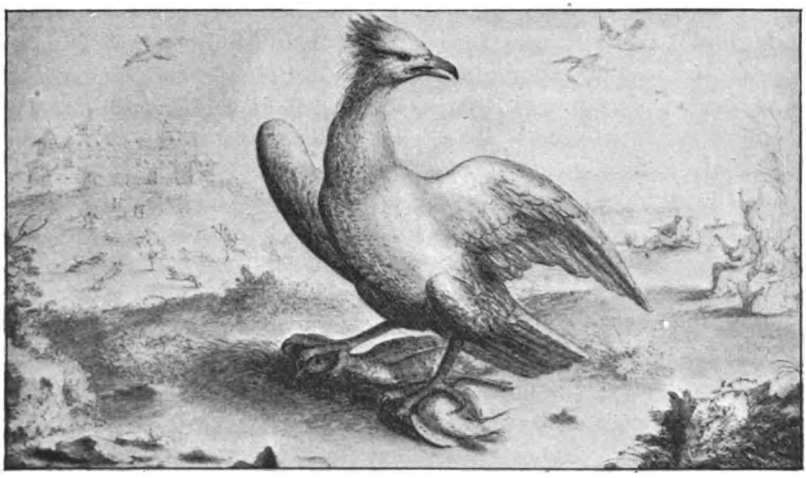
were still on this path. There are big ones and little ones, Monsieur Gerard.'

'Let us be off, then, and quickly,' said Gerard: and putting his hand in his pocket he liberally rewarded Braco, as was his custom, for the good news.

We hastened towards the part of the forest where we were to take up our posts. Gerard, with a shake of the reins, leapt the ditch and disappeared in the wood. We had not gone far when we heard the noise of the chase approaching us—to our great surprise, for we had not expected to come up with it so soon. We walked faster and faster, and at last set off running as hard as we could, in order to reach the path where we were to be posted, and over which the boars would have to come to gain the thicket behind. The post that had been assigned to me was an excellent pass known by the name of 'Etraillat.' It had formerly been a sort of quarry, now covered up with huge pieces of rock and thick brambles. I was close upon it, when all at once I saw Gerard arrive at full speed from the opposite side, jump off his horse, throw down his horn with marvellous promptness, and run and hide himself behind one of these rocks. It was time—the boars were on him. Dashing along they rush through the line, a shot is fired. I see a boar roll over, another shot and the whole herd rush by, three, four, ten animals pass with giddy speed, another jumps from a rock, rolls over, gets up again and disappears. I could not possibly count the number of the black brutes as they come storming along, appearing and disappearing the same minute.

Gerard had only been able to fire two shots. Coming up to him, for the first time in my life I see him smiling. Two huge beasts, one dead on the road, another struggling in a ditch. A little way beyond lies a grand old fellow with his backbone broken. Such is the sight which offers itself to my eyes, and which I shall never forget. '*Unio, deuzidi, tercinet*,' exclaimed Gerard pointing to his three victims It was his way of counting when he was in a particularly good humour.

Three huge boars all lying in a space of twenty yards and brought down by two shots. That was indeed a stroke of good fortune that I envy for myself and for my best friends.



THE AUSTRALIAN ELEVEN OF 1899

BY W. J. FORD

It is not a very easy task to write dispassionately on a subject which involves the humiliation of our *amour propre*, nor do I believe in the asseverations of those who wrinkle their faces into a forced smile and say, 'After all, if they *did* beat us, they are our own flesh and blood; and do think of the good that these interchanges of visits have done, in the closer linking of Greater Britain with the Mother Country!' This is all very pretty and sentimental, my good friend, but an Englishman does not relish a beating, even if it is his first cousin that handles the rod, nor do I remember that the visits of English sides to America, or the rivalry between British and American yachts, did much to assuage the acerbity of Yankee feelings when the Venezuelan question was to the fore. Things are different now, Americans and English being allies as well as cousins, nor need we fear anything approaching to bad blood between England and Australia; but there is no doubt that party feeling runs high when cricket matches, especially test matches, are the red-hot question of the day. Setting aside one unpleasant incident of the present trip, an incident, however, which seemed to ruffle the Englishmen more than the Australians, our visitors can hardly complain of the treatment they have received at the hands of the players,

the public, or the press, though the public hardly gave them the applause to which they had a claim after their valiant 'save' at the Oval, which gained them the supremacy of the series. The tone of the few extracts I have seen from Australian papers has hardly been nice, either this year or in other years, and 'incidents' have been more frequent over the sea than on this side of it. But let that rest; we are more concerned here with Darling's men and their prowess.

The question that all persons interested in cricket have asked each other relates to the position which Darling's eleven takes among other Australian sides. That it is a very great side all must admit: the point is, Is it the greatest? and to such a question no definite answer is possible, as comparison is difficult when seventeen years have elapsed since the visit of that famous side which Murdoch captained in 1882, and to which up to this year the first place had been unanimously awarded. Critics own that the weak point in the eleven of 1899 is the absence of a fine forcing batsman of the type of Massie, McDonnell, or Lyons; also in its lack of a phenomenal bowler like Spofforth; and herein I side with the critics, though I do not hold that the lack of a particular class of bowler or batsman necessarily proves inferiority. In fact the general excellence of the latest visitors was so remarkable, that on few occasions was a phenomenon required. Figures give but a meagre clue, and though they are here quoted, they are only quoted as a matter of reference: Murdoch's men won twenty-three matches and lost four, Darling's won sixteen and lost three, only first-class matches being included. Murdoch's eleven beat England in the solitary test match played, Darling's eleven won the only test match which was played out; to enter into the possibilities and probabilities of drawn matches would be waste of ink and paper. Murdoch had a fine team of all-round men, including one or two men of exceptional brilliance; Darling had a rather better side of all-rounders, but the brilliant ones were not there. To which then is the first place to be awarded? I give my vote to Murdoch and his command, chiefly on the grounds that the English bowling of 1882 was a great deal stronger than it has been in 1899, and further because Grace was in 1882 an exceedingly fine batsman, only just past his prime, and his wonderful patience and skill did much to wear down the opposing bowling and leave a gap for the reserve columns to scramble through. To compare the sides man for man and average for average would be futile; any schoolboy would see that; men vary with conditions, and

those conditions have varied considerably in seventeen years, so considerably that no tests that figures can give can be reasonably applied. Time-tests afford no real clue to form either in running or rowing: racing times depend on the condition of the course and the keenness of the competition; billiard records vary according to the shape and size of the pockets; possibly in jumping only can the records of the past and present be fairly compared; but when it comes to cricket, who can say, after ample consideration, that Freeman was a better bowler than Richardson, Giffen a better bowler than Shaw, Parr a finer batsman than Ranjitsinhji, or Maclaren a sounder fieldsman than Royle? The name of Grace is, of course, omitted; he is worthily privileged to sit on the cricketers' Olympus, and quaff his nectar from the hands of Hebe, unassailed and unassailable by human critics.

Talking to Murdoch at Lord's on the relative excellence of the two sides, I said that I gave his team the pre-eminence on the ground that the English bowling of 1882 was distinctly better than that of 1899, and his answer was, 'You've exactly hit the mark; my team would have made more runs, and have made them quicker—note that, for it is an important point—than the present one against the bowling of to-day.' And even if one makes a little allowance for the natural bias which a man has towards his own *troupe*, I feel convinced that Murdoch was right. The present side has been lucky in catching us in an off-year, especially as far as fast bowling is concerned, and in a year too when fast bowling was the only chance. Had Richardson been in form, had Lockwood's leg remained sound, and had Kortright been able to play, we might have won one test match, or even two; as it is, they couldn't play, and we must take our defeat gracefully and meekly, not forgetting that where Bradley failed to pull us through, Kortright might have had no greater success; and again, while lamenting our own accidents, we must not forget that the Australians have had their own casualties. Thus Hill, the soundest, though almost the least attractive, batsman of the side was on the sick list for many weeks; Iredale, not far short of being the crack batsman of the team, was in a similar plight; while Worrall's knee has been a perpetual source of anxiety. With three men either in hospital or knocking at its door, Darling must have had many an anxious moment, for another accident would have left him in a sorry fix—his side short of a man and his reserves in the hands of the surgeon; whereas we Englishmen had an unlimited reserve, and after a

certain point our difficulty was only to decide who should stand out, Brockwell holding a record as a 'reserve,' for, selected five times, he only took the field, save as a substitute, once.

Regarding the Australian side as a whole, I should especially commend its thoroughness. The bowling was always good, the batting always good, and the fielding superb. It was in this last department alone that we Englishmen took quite a second place, chiefly in the sub-department of throwing. Why Australians throw better than Englishmen may be a matter of physiology or of climate; anyhow, the fact remains, that when an English out-field held the ball, the Australians generally dared to run; when an Australian held it, the Englishman said 'No!' In ground fielding, and also in running, I seemed to detect an inferiority on our part, and especially in the cleanness of the pick-up. Our catching appeared to me to be quite equal to theirs, perhaps a trifle superior, and they could teach us nothing, practical or theoretical, in the art of keeping wicket. Kelly was exceedingly good, but we have a dozen who are as good as he, for he is no Blackham. Johns had no chance of showing his form.

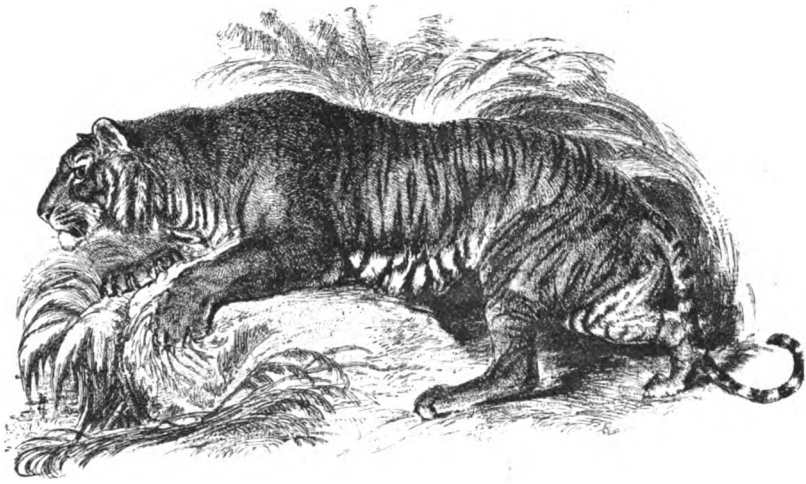
Passing from the fielding to the bowling and batting, I am disposed not to lean any argument on figures, but only to use them as a support for my own theories as deduced from observation; for it is perfectly fair in comparing contemporaries to use contemporary figures, when all the men concerned have been engaged in the same in-and-out contests, for the Australians have met most of the big counties—the M.C.C. twice, the Universities, and England, the last named being the only match in which none of our men could figure as opponents. I must add also, that the dire necessities of 'going to press' compel me to use data which do not take us up to the end of the tour. Pitting bowler against bowler, we find that Paish and Trumble are about level, Rhodes being far ahead of both, that Mead has a far better average than Howell—I am trying to compare bowlers of somewhat similar styles—Bradley than Jones, Lockwood than Noble, and Young than McLeod. These comparisons are roughly accurate; how is it then that the Australian side has a higher reputation for bowling than ours? Simply and solely because our bowlers are nowhere as batsmen, and none of them would find a place in an Australian side, except Lockwood and possibly Bradley. They cannot afford to play specialists unless they specialise in a remarkable degree. The five English bowlers mentioned are not likely to get 100 runs between them

in a given match; what are the five Australians likely to get? Ask me another, please! And the gist of the whole thing is that our five men represent four counties, and can never be on the same side together, while the Australian quintette is only a fraction of a select *coterie* of fourteen. I might, by the way, have balanced Jones with Mold, but Jones would only have suffered by the new comparison. When we look at the batting averages the results are equally unfavourable, on paper, to our visitors. There are fifteen Englishmen with higher records than the top Australian, while the lowest average among their nine regular batsmen brings its owner, Gregory, very far down the list. The inspection and comparison of these figures at first surprised and then bothered me, till at last I saw light, the only possible explanation of the almost invariable success of the Australians being, that all their men were always coming off pretty well, while with English sides—not representative sides, of course—the big scores depended on a few men; if these failed, the side was undone. Speaking with a magnificent vagueness, utterly unsupported by an investigation of figures and scores, I reckon that where five men of an English side scored between 30 and 100, six or seven of the Australians did the same thing, and that they had a far superior tail end; indeed if Jones suddenly lost his bowling and had to practise batting, I am sure that two years later he would be a scorer and a slasher of the McDonnell type. It was supremely good fielding and a general all-roundishness that we did not possess that let the Australians in for a soft thing, though even they will admit that a picked side was not to be trifled with. True it is that they beat the M.C.C. twice with great ease, but in each match all the best counties were engaged with each other, and the Committee of the M.C.C. very properly refused to exercise its right of claiming players who were required by their counties; hence the teams that took the field were in no way representative of the Club, which has among its members nearly all the cracks of our cricket.

As a matter of style, Trumper and Iredale are the only men who show what we Englishmen consider graceful and effective form; this only proves that 'style,' while attractive to the eye, is not essential to good scoring, for the more rugged form of our friends' batting tried our bowling to the ninth degree. Nor do I think, heretical as it may appear, that there was any *very* great cricketer among them, but that rather they were all great, thereby forming a *very* great combination—never, however, so great as when things were going wrong. They failed, indeed, to please

the spectators, who settled down in their seats with calm resignation as soon as our visitors began to bat. Yet they were not in the aggregate such very slow scorers; but it is a pity that, showing as they undoubtedly did at times great powers of forcing the game, they did not choose to play this style of cricket a little oftener; it would have won them several drawn matches, and would have helped to fill their coffers, for I have no hesitation in saying that the comparatively small attendances at the later matches were due to the general feeling of the public that they were not going to get much fun for their money—while not craving for farce, it could not be attracted by tragedy in a sweltering summer like the last.

I am convinced, and others agree with me, that the exchanges of visits are even now too frequent, and that ten years would be a better interval than three; but as long as the fact remains that there is money in the business, so long will the business be kept on. But there will soon be no money in the business if slow cricket is to be the rule and not the exception. It nearly killed cricket both in Australia and Nottingham, and will do so again. I have heard it said that the Australians learned this game from Barlow and Scotton; so be it, but we never had seven or eight of this sort on the same side. However, enough of this, as I wish to conclude by congratulating the Australians on the success and harmony of the tour, and Darling in particular on having so fine a side to manage, and on the skill and discretion with which he managed it.



SHOOTING IN THE SUNDERBUNDS

BY LADY WESTMACOTT

THE very name of the Sunderbunds had always had a strong attraction for me, so, when circumstances were unkind enough to place me in Calcutta, early in 1898, I at once began scheming as to how I could possibly manage a shoot there.

I had not long to wait. Towards the end of January I was asked to join a party of four men, two of whom were then in Calcutta, the other two, 'globe-trotters' from England, were expected in a fortnight's time. In a few days we were ready to start. A kind friend lent me a ·500 express rifle, so, to provide myself with cartridges and a couple of suits of 'kharki,' was all I had to think of. Mr. Oswald, who was organising the shoot, laid in the stores, and did the house-keeping, so I had no cares except to enjoy myself. We left Calcutta by train one night, and very early in the morning carried ourselves and our provisions into the steamboat that plies down the Hooghly daily; they are large boats of two stories—the luggage is piled on the lower deck, and the upper deck is divided in two with a rail—one end for the natives, and the other for first-class passengers. We shared our end with a fat Baboo,[1] who sat on a wooden bench

[1] Native clerk.

for five hours with his knees drawn up to his chin, and stared at us stolidly. The first part of the day the river was very broad, and it was only the different kinds of native craft on its waters that made it worth looking at, as the banks were mere stretches of mud with uninteresting flats beyond. However, towards mid-day we turned into a series of canals where the jungle came right down on either side, except where it was cleared for cultivation, or when we came to a village and stopped to discharge or take on more passengers. Of course, this part of the Hooghly is a tidal river, and it was curious to watch the native 'as he is' at these halting-stages. If one had wanted to get on board oneself, I don't know whether there would have been other arrangements, but for the natives, at low tide, the steamer stopped about twelve yards from the bank, then, without a murmur, each 'Mahomet' divested himself of his shoes—which he poised on his turban, or hung round his neck if his hands were full—tucked up his loin-cloth and proceeded to wade to the 'mountain' as the 'mountain' wouldn't come any nearer to him. Imagine such a scene on a Scotch loch at the landing-stages! With their feet and legs covered with black mud, they then took their places huddled on the floor of the upper deck, where the sun dried them, and I sat and envied them their delightfully philosophic way of taking the ups and downs of life.

We had an excellent lunch on board, prepared by our own servants, and produced punctually at the accustomed hour, in the extraordinary way that meals always do turn up in India, whether you are the possessor of a cook and kitchen, or one or other, or neither. The afternoon passed without incident, to a mind accustomed to the East, though perhaps, if our globe-trotters had been with us, they might have remarked on the number of dead bodies that floated down the river in every stage of decay. The banks of the river are covered for miles with the burning-places for the dead, but the bodies of the poor are only charred and then committed to the tide. I noticed an old fisherman sitting on the end of a log that projected into the river, with his legs dangling in the water; he sat with his head down stream, and I saw, to my horror, the body of a woman, much decomposed, with her black hair all swirling in the water, coming up behind him with the current, straight for his fishing line and feet. I felt inclined to shout to him to 'kubber-da,'[1] as his plank was very narrow, and I knew, in his place, a corpse suddenly coming up from behind and hitting me on the feet, would have made

[1] Hindustani for 'take care.'

me fall straight into the water; but I didn't call out to him, but waited and watched, with my heart not beating, to see the *finale*. The current brought her up with a bump against him—just as I anticipated—and *I* caught my breath. As for *him*, he never turned round even, but giving her body a gentle push on with one of his long, brown monkey-feet, he made another cast with his line, and 'kep' on saying nuffing!' The body of a tiger floated by towards sunset. I wonder what his history had been?

We left the river boat about eight P.M., and boarded our steam-launches that the Rajah of D—— had very kindly lent us. Next morning early we continued our journey down the river, with the most luxuriant vegetation on either hand, the jungle getting denser as we got further from civilisation. Beautiful palms and creepers, and the red blossom of the palas-papari (bastard teak) gave the whole scene a tropical, wicked look, suggestive of tigers and creeping things. The air was laden, too, with a heavy, sweet perfume, which all added to the subtle charm of the place. We eventually anchored at the very mouth of the Sunderbunds, close to the sea, where the river had again widened out, and a breeze blew inland and kept us cool. We got excellent fresh fish every day here, brought us by the fishermen who go out to sea; but of sport I have not much to tell. I never saw such impossible jungle, densely thick, and so interwoven with creepers and undergrowth that I don't see how one would ever penetrate it at all.

The local 'shikarri,' who had been told to meet us here, had not turned up, so, hoping he would—which he didn't—we spent the first day in the jolly-boat going up the creeks potting at alligators. They make excellent practice, and at first are difficult to see, as they bask in the sun on the wet mud banks as the tide falls; they don't often let you get near them, and when you do get a shot, it doesn't in the least follow that you get an alligator, unless their spines are broken; it is wonderful how they manage to flop back into the river, and they don't give you a second chance, by showing anything more than their eyes again on the surface of the water. This small target to aim at, and a bobbing jolly-boat, make it a thousand to one chance for the alligator.

We waited two or three days vainly for the 'shikarri,' and seeing nothing ourselves, and getting no 'khubber' (news) of sport from the few wood-cutters and fishermen whom we met, we decided to leave the next day and steam up another branch of the Hooghly to the village where the 'shikarri' lived.

We had seen 'slots' of deer the day before on a sand-ridge,

with some tussocks of grass, between the sea and the jungle; so, the last evening, Mr. Oswald and I started off just before sundown to see if we could get a shot at the deer—we walked along the shore on the sand with the jungle on our right hand about fifty yards off. We had one or two deep creeks to cross, and Mr. Oswald had to take the rifles, whilst I crossed on the back of the native whom we had taken with us to carry my guns and cartridges. We were walking on sand that was under water at high tide, and we had gone about a mile and a half, when Mr. Oswald, who was just ahead, pulled up and said, 'By jove, here are the fresh pugs of a tiger!' and it was so, leading straight down from the jungle to the water. We looked to right and left of us, but nothing was to be seen, and we could trace the prints no further. There was a long ridge of grove and rushes by the water's edge, and we concluded the tiger must have travelled along that; but whether backwards or forwards we could not tell.

Less than half a mile to our front was a small clump of trees, through which we had to pass, and we observed some pig in them hurrying back into the jungle. It was exceedingly ignorant of us, but at the time it never struck us that they were hurrying away from the tiger; we only thought that in our excitement we had made more noise than intended, and so frightened the pig, and as our deer's feeding-ground was only a little way beyond the clump of trees, we cautioned each other to be quiet, and proceeded on in silence. Passing through the clump one after the other we got into broken ground, where the sand had sifted into heaps, with big tussocks of grass every here and there. We kept close up by the jungle now, not ten yards off, and by this time the moon was up, and we could see the deer coming out to feed. Motioning to the coolie to lie down flat on the ground where he was, we took the rifles and cartridges from him, and crawled on our stomachs for the next hundred yards or more. The deer were very much on the alert, continually whistling to one another, and keeping quite close to the jungle. We were almost ten minutes before we could get a shot, and it was then so dark that, for my part, when we both decided to shoot together—having each marked down our deer—I fired into space more than at any particular mark. With the simultaneous bang every deer galloped for all he was worth back into the jungle, and it was so dark that we had to wander about for a few minutes before we could see if we had dropped any deer or not. We had not, but we thought we heard one travelling in the

AND THEN FOLLOWED US ON

jungle as if he were wounded and dragging, so, without thinking, we both ran into the trees from where the noise came, but whatever it was moved on; whether pig or deer I cannot say, only that it was hoofed.

The darkness was intense, and Mr. Oswald and I had to call out to each other to enable us to keep together. Just then the native joined us, and begged us to leave the jungle at once; he was very nervous, and told us that we were doing a very dangerous thing, and as there was no chance of getting any 'forrarder,' we came out, and putting our hammers at safety, started off home, thinking the deer had been hardly worth the walk. The moon was shining brightly on the sand as we retraced our way, when suddenly I stopped, and catching Mr. Oswald by the arm, pointed in silence to our former footmarks. There they were, Mr. Oswald's big shooting boots, my smaller ones, and the native's sandals, *and there also*, the whole way from the clump of trees, *were the tiger's*! I don't mind owning that I looked over my shoulder to see if he was doing the return journey with us too, but nothing was to be seen. He must have been in the trees as we passed through them, and then followed us on, and perhaps had been frightened away when we shot together; but why he had not seized the luckless coolie that we had left behind, I don't know. Of course we remembered *afterwards* that Sunderbund tigers are all supposed to be man-eaters, because they have very little else to eat, I imagine; also, that we had been told of their habit of following one up. I think the deer saved us from a nasty accident, for we never saw him again, and keen as I was for a chance at a tiger, I don't think I should have cared much about it in that uncertain light—on our feet too.

It was disgusting, all the same, to feel that there were tiger so near and nothing to be made of them. How we anathematised that absent shikarri! There was no use in remaining there without him, so we were off next day, and landed him on our launch that evening by the lobe of his ear. He was a hopeful person, and soon had us in much better tempers by telling us how many buffalo and tigers there were in a place we could easily reach by the next day; so we cheered up, and tried to keep off malarial fever with a glass of 'Vermouth' at sundown.

Early in the morning we were up and walking across the fields to our jungle for buffalo; and as soon as we entered it we saw some very big hoof-prints that raised our spirits. We spent the day either in the jungle or burrowing along the tunnels made

by the animals in the long 'elephant grass.' This grass is a wonderful sight. Had we been on elephants it would have been well over us; as it was—walking on our feet—we could see no sky at all, only the grass meeting overhead, and we having just room to follow one after the other, along intersecting passages that had been made by the wild buffalo forcing their way through. One couldn't help looking at the very formidably strong grass sides, and wondering if one *was* charged by a buff, what one would do! At least I know that *I* thought that more than once. We got on to the pugs of a 'solitary bull' that day, and he must have been a big 'un; but we made such a noise going through the jungle, stepping on dry twigs, and occasionally having to stop to hack a way, that we never got very much chance of coming up to him. We could hear him every now and then, and wind him often, especially in the grass, which retains the strong smell of a buff. as he brushes through it.

It was uncommonly hot work in that stifling climate—one of the muggiest, moistest climates in India, I suppose, and there was nothing to console us, for though we spent almost a week in these parts we never got a shot or a chance of a shot. The jungle was so impossible to beat for tiger that we 'tied up' here, and had a 'kill,' over which we sat one night for a few hours, but we were nearly eaten alive by mosquitoes, and saw nothing of our tiger, though we heard two or three answering each other in the silence of the night. I think if he had turned up it would have been too dark to see him. The old hands in the Sunderbunds shoot their tigers by fixing an electric light over the 'kill,' I believe—'I tell the tale as 't was told to me!'

We now left the lower part of the Hooghly, and steamed away up to the Backergunge District, where we were joined by the two globe-trotters, who afforded us endless amusement, as they didn't know a word of the language, or what to make of life at all under its—to them—new conditions. The Rajah of D—— added to his kindness of lending us his steam launches, by providing us with eight elephants here—two with howdahs and two with pads—the other four simply to make up the beating line. They were none of them what you would describe as well-trained 'shikar' elephants, but the old man in charge assured us that one he called 'Mary' was in every way perfect, so she was selected as my mount; but as there were only two howdahs—and a pad is very difficult to shoot from—I, in my diffidence, took up a position in the back of the howdah, and, owing to 'Mary's' perfect manners, I ought to have got most of the shots, for if

'Mary' met only a pig, she would immediately trumpet and wheel round, so that *I* was facing the shot, and the man in the front of the howdah would be firing into space! But she was the best mannered of the lot—I *will* say that for her!

The natives brought in 'khubber' of tiger in two or three directions, but the first one we saw we didn't get then, though he met his fate a few days later. There was a family consisting of Mr., Mrs., and two big cubs; these all fell to our party on different days. The tigress was a beauty, measuring 9 ft. 3 in. We got five tigers in the ten days we were here, but all without any accidents. I think a beater was struck down one day, but not hurt.

The buffalo gave us more fun. They were hard to distinguish at first from the herds of semi-tame ones that wander about the 'elephant grass' too, and one of our globe-trotting friends found a difficulty in telling the bulls from the cows. He brought home a very fine specimen of a cow's head the first day; he explained that he wanted a specimen of each, so nothing more was to be said!

Generally the buff. charged after being wounded, and a grand sight they look as they come with their heads down, and their nostrils distended and smoking. Once a wounded one crossed a river, and we on our elephant stood on the bank literally pelting the poor beast with lead. As he struggled up the opposite bank, a bullet tickled him more than his flesh and blood could stand, so round he turned to have it out with us, and swam all across the broad river again, coming straight for us. I felt very meanly when a bullet made his head go under water within a few yards of our elephant.

I am a little ashamed to relate how *I* got my first wild buffalo, as it is hardly anyone's *idea* of buffalo shooting; but so it happened. 'It is always the unreadable that occurs.' Some 'gowlis'[1] came in to ask us to shoot a bull buffalo that had taken possession of their tame herd for the past month. They were frightened of him, and couldn't milk their cows in peace or safety. We dropped down the river accordingly, very early the next morning, in our jolly-boat, and arrived at the place just at sunrise. The tide was low, and we had to get out and wade through the water for thirty yards or so. The native boatman was told off to carry me on his shoulders, so that I might keep dry, but my keenness went one better than my balance. On trying to get on his shoulders I was in such a hurry that I shot

[1] Native cowherds.

over his head into the water, and was drenched from head to foot. Looking like a 'drookit cra',' I hurried on shore, and there was the whole herd with five or six 'gowlis' moving amongst them milking the cow-buffalos. There was no mistaking the wild bull. There he stood in the midst of them, a grand beast, with a beautiful head and crest. The 'gowlis' begged us not to shoot till they had finished milking, so we waited at one side, I feeling that I was rather having my leg pulled in being made to shoot such a remarkably tame wild bull at all! It had been agreed that I was to have the shot before we started. However, consoling myself that it would at any rate be a kindness to the natives to destroy him, when they had done milking, I made them drive him away as far as they could from the herd; but he would only move a few paces and then come back. I was so close to him—only forty yards off—and he was so big standing sideways on to me, that I thought even *I* couldn't possibly miss him if I tried, so I let drive and hit him just by the heart; he got another shot in him from Mr. Todd, who was standing by my side, and then he dropped. I was just feeling miserably ashamed of myself, when suddenly we heard the 'gowlis' screaming to us to run for our lives. There were the whole tame herd of buffalo with their heads down, sniffing the blood, and considering whether they would charge us *en masse*. We didn't give them much time to make up their minds—we ran, best time on record, into the river and got to the boat. When I had leisure to stop and breathe, I couldn't help thinking it was rather nice of the ladies to take his death so much to heart.

I left the party here, alas! The rest went on to Central India and added many more tiger to the score.

I knew what the Sunderbunds would be like several years before I ever saw them. I can still see them in my dreams—even in peaceful England—with the feathery bamboos, the gigantic ferns, the dark jungle, the scarlet-flowered leafless trees, reflected in the swift sombre river that is fed with corpses and swirls them, with insatiable arms, down to the sea.

THE FEAT OF THE YOUNG MEN

BY HON. J. N. KIRCHHOFFER

PRAIRIE chicken shooting in Manitoba has been deteriorating for the past three or four years. That this is not caused by settlement or cultivation is evidenced by the fact that up to 1893 the birds increased mightily, that being the most prolific season that I can remember. Since then they have got scarcer year by year without the reason being apparent. Several theories have been advanced, the most plausible being that many breeding birds are poisoned in the spring by the grains of wheat soaked in strychnine which the farmers are in the habit of scattering along the edges of their fields to kill the gophers or prairie dogs which are so destructive to the wheat fields in a dry season.

With the view of affording protection to this beautiful and attractive game bird, the Manitoba Government has postponed the opening of the season until October 1, by which time the coveys have mostly packed and become so wild and strong on the wing that large bags are a rarity, and it is hoped that this will have the effect of increasing the stock almost as much as a completely closed season would do.

At the end of September I got a telegram from the mining

town of Rossland, B.C., from Major Pellatt, of Toronto, that he and two friends were coming through on the first train and hoped to be in time for some grouse shooting. They arrived early on Sunday, October 2. The Major is an old chum of mine, and has slain many hundreds of grouse and wild fowl by my side in the course of his autumnal trips to the prairie. The friends were Mr. Frederic Nicholls, of Toronto, and his son Walter. The father is what I think you term a 'magnate.' He is great 'in the City,' president of a big Electric Light Company and of no less than four railways, and is at present building the Havana Electric Railway in Cuba. Withal he is one of the keenest sportsmen I have met: an admirable shot and skilful fisherman. Walter is a schoolboy of sixteen, and was out on his first shooting expedition.

Our programme was soon arranged for the following morning. We had two double 'rigs,' as they are called, with drivers. In one I got George Coldwell, Q.C. (who owns a couple of well-trained dogs, and is the most successful and unselfish chicken hunter I know), to take the magnate and Walter. The other contained the Major and myself and my friend Shaw Cottingham with his setter Sport who had lately taken first prize in the field trials. I also took my Gordon setter Fan, a present to me after a campaign against the grouse last season from General Montgomery Moore, late Commander-in-Chief of Her Majesty's Forces in Canada.

It was a lovely morning when we started. There had been a light fall of snow, but it was fast disappearing before the sun's rays as our two rigs drove abreast over the prairie and stubble, keeping about a mile apart, the dogs working between and in front of us. Soon we saw the other rig halt. The shooters got out and walked up to the dogs which were standing in the stubble. A large covey arose, three birds fell, and the rest were scattered in various directions. One brace headed our way and pitched within one hundred yards. The Major alighted. The birds lay well, and were soon transferred to the back of our carriage. Then, as our companions had crossed us to the north in pursuit of the remainder of their covey, we swung round to the south, and meeting a farmer walking across the prairie, I inquired if he had seen any birds.

'Why,' said he, 'just before you came in sight I must have started nigh on to half a hundred of them off the stubble, and they pitched among the bluffs (clump of bushes) in that pasture field.'

Just then Sport pointed. The Major and I got out and bagged one apiece of a beautiful pair of pinnated grouse. Then driving down wind about half a mile, we all got out, and, walking abreast, we beat through some thin scrub and bluffs. There we found some scattered birds and bagged them all. Then into the pasture, and here, while walking through a bluff, the big covey we were looking for got up all round me. I secured three while they were darting through the trees, and Cottingham knocked down a brace which came rocketting over his head. The rest pitched out in the open prairie, and though we tried a careful stalk they were too wild and rose long before we came within range. We marked them down in some scrub at the base of the sandhills nearly a mile away, right in the line of our companions, who immediately started in pursuit.

Whilst we were beating around for some odd birds that had lingered behind the main body, shots were heard from our other party. A cloud of birds rose, and to our delight we saw that they were heading our way. They broke up into small groups and dropped into the bluffs here and there, some pitching right into the very clump from which we had originally flushed them, almost within shot of where we stood. It was now getting on towards noon. The day had become very warm, and the birds lay well. For an hour we hunted them through the scrub, and when a halt was called for lunch, our party had sixteen brace in the bag, while the others had accounted for twelve, of which Walter, like 'All Muggleton' of happy memory, had scored one.

We saw a good many birds on the stubble in the afternoon, but they were very wild. Each party, however, added four or five brace to the bag, and all reached home in time for dinner, tired and hungry, but delighted with the day's sport.

The following morning was devoted to preparations for our trip to Lake Manitoba, where I had arranged for a campaign against the ducks. All around the shores of this lake are immense marshes, the haunt of wild fowl of all kinds. It is within easy distance of the main line of the Canadian Pacific Railway. At Clandeboye Bay, fourteen miles north of the Poplar Point Station, resides my half-breed friend John Atkinson, in whose care I leave my canoe, decoys, &c., with privilege of user, I, however, to have first call upon his services whenever I need them. John almost deserves an article to himself. An excellent shot, and a devoted and untiring sportsman, intelligent and painstaking, he is the best duck-hunter I know. The intricate marshes are to him as plain as a high road, and all the

habits of the wild fowl are an open book. Often have I admired the skill with which he has placed me in the thick of the flight, while guns but a short distance on either side were getting but little shooting. Then, when the flight ceased, how stealthily he would paddle me through creeks and marshes where the mallards sprang from the long rushes, or the teal swung with rapid flight round a point! The man who has John for a guide is pretty sure to get the best bag, so I generally let my friends have him by turns.

It was 8 P.M. when we reached Poplar Point. A wet snow was falling, and owing to the heavy roads and delay caused by dropping some boxes of shells off one of the waggons it was past midnight when we reached camp. Our tent had been pitched on a point close to a creek running into the marsh. As the ground was low a bed of marsh hay, a couple of feet thick, kept us from the damp earth, while rubber sheets, blankets, and buffalo robes made a comfortable couch.

After a good breakfast on Wednesday morning the party started in three canoes. John took the magnate, and Angus the Major. I followed with George Taylor, while Walter tramped along the shore and practised upon everything, animate and inanimate, that he came across.

There had been a large party from Winnipeg shooting here the previous week, and birds were by no means tame or easy to get; nevertheless, when we assembled in the evening the magnate had thirty-seven ducks and the Major nine, while I brought in thirty-five. Walter reported that he had had a 'grand day,' and got several plover and waders. Later in the evening one farmer called and presented a bill for $5 for injuries done to his cow, which he stated had been peppered by our young friend, whilst another filed a claim for damages done to the handle of his axe. Investigation disclosed that whilst passing through his yard Walter had fired at some snow birds that were quietly reposing upon the axe-handle, and three grains of shot had scored and roughened that weapon. The demands appeared to me preposterous and excessive, but our magnate is as generous as he is sportsmanlike, and promptly and laughingly settled all claims against his son rather than have any fuss with the natives.

Thursday the Major had John, and the magnate George Taylor, while I stayed on shore to pilot Walter and try the meadows for snipe. I must confess that few sports are as dear to me as a day after *Scolopax Wilsonii*. Born in the south of Ireland, I was bred to snipe shooting as naturally as a duck takes

MALLARDS SPRANG FROM THE LONG RUSHES

to water. Many a day I have shot the bogs and water meadows around Blarney with the present owner of that historic castle, who was one of the warmest of my boyhood's friends. All our holidays—he from Harrow and I from Marlborough—were spent together. In summer we played cricket and threshed the mountain streams for trout, and the Lee for salmon. Later on we shot grouse on the mountains and woodcock in the coverts, but most of all we loved to drive the Blarney bog for snipe. And so, owing I suppose to this early training, I will even now forego almost any other kind of shooting for a day at the dear little sporting long-billed birds.

So we got a rig and a driver and hied us north to the hay meadows. While driving along we saw a couple of large hawks hovering along the edge of the marsh, and occasionally a cloud of birds would rise and settle again on the mud-banks. These I knew to be the red-breasted or Drummond snipe, which go in large flocks, and are very confiding in their habits. Even after being well peppered they will return again and again to their favourite haunts, affording raking shots as they swoop past. We do not consider them quite as toothsome as their Wilson brethren, and, of course, for sporting purposes they are vastly inferior. But they were grand practice for the young hand. I accordingly left Walter pounding away at them, and tramped the meadows where snipe were fairly plentiful but wild. It is a curious thing that though these birds have only just come down from the northern breeding grounds where they have never seen man, and while here are almost entirely unmolested, I have rarely seen them lie at all close.

We met at the camp for lunch, and my companion was in ecstasies over his sport. He had gathered nearly fifty birds, while my bag consisted of eighteen brace of snipe and a brace of pinnated grouse. In the afternoon we refilled our cartridge-bags and drove a couple of miles to a cattle-ranch, owned by a crusty old fellow named Williams. It is an ideal place for snipe, which can be found there when they are nowhere else, but the old fellow is chary of giving permission to shoot. He says that sportsmen frighten his cattle, and shoot in amongst them when hunting along the reeds. However, he gave his consent this time, and we started in.

Snipe were plentiful, and my game-carrier was soon pretty well filled. They flew too fast and too crooked, however, for the new hand, who finally gave them up, and pursued some mallards and teal with which the slough abounded. There were some

tame geese in a pond at the other end of the enclosure, and I noticed that they got up suddenly with a great clatter and flew down to the shanty. Shortly afterwards I was joined by Walter, and while we were resting, for the day had come out very hot, old Williams appeared, advancing towards us with a goose under his arm.

'Oh, here's a game,' said Walter! 'Good old Williams! He wants a goose killed, and has brought it down for me to have a crack at it,' and jumping up with alacrity he advanced towards the rancher with a beaming smile.

'Want me to shoot your goose for you?' he hallooed.

'Why, damn it,' roared old Williams, 'you've done it already,' and proceeded amidst much vituperation to point out a drop of blood on the bird's neck, which he stated came from a shot-hole in the windpipe, and out of which everything that the bird ate or drank hereafter would exude. I joined the youth, and tried to pacify the irate ranchman. I offered him one dollar. 'No.'

'Two, then?'

'No. I want yees to get out of here.'

'All right,' I said, 'we will go,' and turned sadly away, but as the birds would continue to rise in front of and around me, I felt like Pharaoh; I could not let them go, and ere we reached the fence I had completed my twenty-five brace for the afternoon.

In the evening Williams sent over to say that he would take the two dollars and cry quits, but I doubt it will take all my diplomacy to get permission within that enclosure again.

We got back to camp just as our duck-hunters were returning. They had had good sport. The Major showed over sixty ducks, of which the largest part were mallards, while the magnate also had his canoe pretty well loaded down.

Friday was to be only a half-day, as my friends had to leave in the afternoon to catch the train for Winnipeg. The Major, much exercised over the bag we had made the day before, said he would go snipe shooting. Accordingly, John again took the magnate, and started early, as they were going out near the open water. George Taylor paddled me, and we soon came to a large bay which was full of ducks feeding. We drove them out without firing a shot; then set out the decoys and waited. In less than half an hour they began to return (it was evidently a favourite feeding ground), and they decoyed beautifully. By eleven o'clock I had over forty ducks, and was engaged in picking them

THEY HAD HAD GOOD SPORT

up, when John and the magnate appeared paddling home with a boat-load of ducks and a tale of woe. It appeared that the flight had been so fast and furious that in a couple of hours his ammunition had been all expended, and he had been obliged to return with an empty gun. To add to his annoyance, while *en route* seven geese had passed over his head, so close that he had struck at them with his paddle.

I replenished his store, cheering him by pointing out that had he not been driven in by some mishap he would have missed his train to a certainty. They paddled off, and ere he got out of sight I saw him bring down, right and left, a pair of canvas-backs that were coming in at a great height—a most brilliant shot.

At one o'clock we were all back at camp. After a good dinner we packed two huge trunks with the choicest of the birds, and my friends drove off amid the cheers of our camp-followers. We subsequently learned that they had fallen in with a covey of grouse on the trail, and bagged a number of them.

Then John and I made our arrangements for the following day together. As I had to leave for home in the afternoon, an early start was imperative. I took my two guns, the Rigby 12-bore for myself, and the Tolley 10, with which I intended John should do some long shooting after I had loosed off my piece. An ample supply of shells, a good lunch, and two dozen decoys were stowed away in the boat, and then we turned in.

We rose at three, for there was a long six miles to paddle, and the decoys were to be out before daylight this time. After a good breakfast we pushed off and paddled out into the night. That seemed to make no difference to my steersman, who propelled us as rapidly and with as much precision as though the route was electric lighted. Through creek, bay, and lagoon we stole, till gradually the surrounding objects began to take shape. At last we halted, where an island of rushes, about an acre in extent, occupied the centre of a channel, some 200 yards wide, and this John opined would be a good place. The east was already brightening, and before the decoys were all out we could hear the swish of wings overhead. Then backing into the reeds we twisted down bunches of the longest, and, tying them to the thwarts, made the canoe as steady as a barn floor.

Just then I heard a rush of wings, and rising suddenly saw a flock of ducks swinging round outside the decoys. It was a long shot, but I browned them with both barrels and three dropped.

'Canvas-backs, by thunder!' said John, as he potted a lively

cripple that was making off towards the opposite bank. 'That's a good beginning.'

Then a wary old mallard passed high over the decoys, craning his long neck down suspiciously. I missed him clean with the first, but the second barrel doubled him up like a dish-rag.

'You located him fine that time,' said John.

It was now broad daylight. Shots were going off at different parts of the marsh, and the birds were kept moving. Some decoyed beautifully; others took no notice of them, but passed at long range. They came up the channel and down the channel, straight at us, sometimes over the reeds in front, or swung in from behind. They came as single spies, in twos and threes, or in whole battalions. At times we would shoot till our gun-barrels were too hot for comfort. Then there would be a cessation, but the flight would soon recommence. What brilliant shots were made, and what occasional easy shots were missed, 'twere long to tell. Four canvas-backs came from the front straight to our hiding place.

'Four dead birds,' whispered my companion. 'Two apiece.'

They were right over the decoys when they discovered the fraud and commenced to climb. I killed with my first barrel; missed the second, and John missed both! Five minutes later a pair of mallards came high up the channel behind us.

'Too far for me. You try 'em,' said I.

'A little beyond me, too, I think,' said John, but at the first crack down came both birds, stone dead. It was an eighty-yard shot at least.

At ten o'clock I called a halt.

'How long will it take to pick up?'

'About an hour.'

'And to paddle home?'

'An hour and a half.'

'Then we must stop now.'

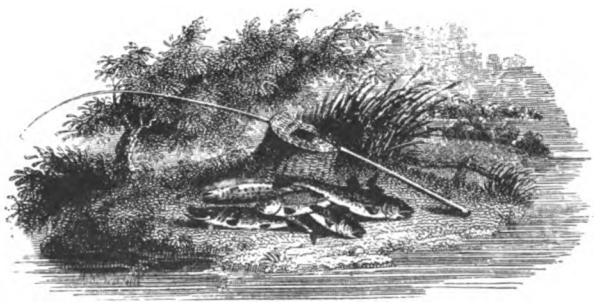
To me it is always a subject of intense admiration the way in which my companion keeps in some chart in his memory the location of the birds which have fallen, and the precision with which he can, after the lapse of hours, go direct to the spot where they lie, is little short of the marvellous. There was no difficulty about those birds that had fallen in front of us. They had drifted to the opposite bank, and we could count them piled along the edge of the reeds. But it was all the same with those that had dropped in the heavy long reeds behind or on either

side of us. He would push the canoe right to where they would be found, without having even to take a glance around. Of course, many birds that had life left in them had crawled or dived away; that is inevitable in duck shooting, but of those that had fallen dead, I positively don't believe we lost a bird, and we picked up eighty-eight. I shot ten more on the way back to camp, and our boat was loaded down to the gunwale.

A reference to my game-book shows the result of this shoot classified as follows:

Mallards	132	Green-winged teal	8
Canvas-backs	48	Golden eye	2
Gadwall	64	Ruddy ducks	16
Redheads	18	Mergansers	11
Bluebills	30	Butterballs	6
Blue-winged teal	24	Total	359

Besides these we had 118 Wilson snipe, 68 Drummond snipe and plover, and several 'various,' among which may be enumerated the cow, the tame goose, and the axe-handle.



NOTES

BY 'RAPIER'

I CONFESS to having had some doubts as to whether Flying Fox stayed. Now, however, the question is decisively settled, for he won the St. Leger quite as easily as the Two Thousand Guineas, and by doing so did not in the least surprise his friends, though it certainly amazed spectators at Doncaster to see Mornington Cannon take his horse so confidently to the front more than a mile from home. After the race Mornington Cannon told me that they had found out at Kingsclere that the colt was a real stayer, but, he added, 'It did not do to say too much about it before the race, in case anything happened.' It is still remarkable that Flying Fox should not have won the Derby more handsomely than he did, for I suppose Caiman, though he never had the ghost of a chance at Doncaster, is a much better horse than Damocles? One wonders where Holocauste would have been had he lived to take his part in the late St. Leger. There is, I fancy, very little question that he would not have been first! Flying Fox's admirable display makes it all the more regrettable that he cannot meet Cyllene, or rather that Cyllene cannot meet him, in the Champion Stakes. Before the St. Leger, supposing the two had been destined to meet at Newmarket on the 10th of this month, Cyllene would very likely have had as many friends

as the Duke of Westminster's colt, the idea then being that Across the Flat the stamina which enabled the four-year-old to win the Ascot Cup would have stood him in good stead, whilst it had not been proved that Flying Fox was such a good horse over more than a mile. Now, however, we know that Flying Fox has abundant stamina also.

In the first number of this Magazine I published a facsimile of a list of the winnings of Isinglass, kindly drawn up for me by Mr. Harry McCalmont, M.P. 'Total 57,185*l.*, the greatest amount in stakes ever won by a single horse,' was the record; and nothing being certain in this world, this may remain the record still; but it certainly looks as if the sum would be far exceeded by the Duke of Westminster's colt. Up to the present time he has won some 33,000*l.* Before the close of the year, all being well, it seems certain that his total will considerably exceed 40,000*l.*, and next year, all continuing to be well, he is engaged in four Ten Thousand Pound races, so called. Their actual value should be at any rate considerably more than 30,000*l.* So that the supremacy of Isinglass, should Flying Fox keep on his legs, will almost inevitably be overcome. The colt, in spite of his hard work, looked fresher at Doncaster than he had done since the Two Thousand. The morning before the race, at early exercise, Mornington Cannon told me that he heard his mount went rather short in his canter. I waited to see him go, however, and he certainly stretched himself out and went freely enough. It seems strange indeed now that he should have been beaten last year by St. Gris and Caiman. I do not for a moment believe that there is much in the popular 'wind resistance' theory, and account for the alteration of form that was so conclusively demonstrated at Doncaster by the fact that Flying Fox has made exceptional improvement since last year. It is a pity that he cannot seal his fame by winning the Ascot Cup, for I assume that his four Ten Thousand Pound races will be deemed enough work for him next season.

Writing last month about the two-year-olds, I said: 'We shall see in the course of a few weeks whether Simon Dale or Democrat is the better of the pair, for I imagine that the Champagne Stakes will go to one of these.' The forecast was correct, inasmuch as it did go to one of them, though the race did not

plainly demonstrate which was the better. Some good judges think that Democrat ought not to have been beaten all the year, and that bad luck, the accidents of the race, lost him the events in which he was not successful. However this may be, Simon Dale was certainly going much the faster in the finish for the Champagne. The idea prevails that Simon Dale is at his best for five furlongs, and therefore that Democrat is likely to have the best of him in the Middle Park Plate on the 13th of this month. The one thing certain is that it ought to be a really exciting race between the two. Simon Dale's proppy forelegs and round joints do not look very much like carrying him over a long career, and his make and shape scarcely suggest ability to come down the hill from Tattenham Corner. As to that, however, it is dangerous to judge by appearances. Old William Day has told me that he never saw a horse more upright in front than Bay Middleton, but he came down the hills at Epsom and elsewhere with the utmost ease and freedom. On the whole the colts seem better than the fillies this year, but I doubt whether any of them are really good. It is always gratifying to know that there is a really first-class horse in training, and if there is not one among the two-year-olds there assuredly is among the three in Flying Fox.

—⟡—

The yearlings sold at Doncaster included some very promising young horses, and some others which it would have been cheaper to shoot than to send for sale. I am told it is really a fact that Elsey, the trainer, actually bought seven, for which there had been no bids, for thirty-five guineas. The Bend Or colt, which fetched three thousand guineas, was a good-looking animal, though I thought heavy in the shoulder. The only fault that could be found with the beautiful little daughter of Isinglass and La Flêche was her lack of size, though she is by no means too small to win races. I do not suppose we shall ever cease to hear the familiar argument that no yearling is worth more than a thousand, adduced by some writer who names a long string of high-priced failures, and answered by someone else who shows that some of the most expensive animals ever bought at auction—La Flêche for instance—have been ridiculously cheap. Everything depends upon a variety of circumstances, with luck prominent amongst them. One always hopes that our English-bred horses will hold their own against American and Colonial importations. I am convinced that the

success of these latter depends in a great measure upon the paddocks in which they and their dams pass their early days. It is a wonder that young horses should thrive at all in some of the paddocks into which young stock are put in England, with scanty, coarse herbage and stained ground; and yet I believe that Eaton Hall is very badly equipped in this matter, notwithstanding which the Duke of Westminster's animals do so well year after year. This looks like an argument against my theory; but I am convinced there is a good deal in it nevertheless.

Elsewhere in this number is an article by Mr. W. J. Ford on the Australian team; but the following notes from another famous cricketer, Mr. R. D. Walker, are too valuable to be neglected, and I gladly utilise the material my friend has so kindly sent me, the more so as he and Mr. Ford mainly discuss different points of the subject. It will be seen that his estimate of the team is not quite in accord with that of my other contributor. Doctors differ! This is the only place in the Magazine in which I can make room for Mr. R. D. Walker, who says: 'All cricketers who have seen the Australian team this year will probably agree in the opinion that it is, taken altogether, the strongest combination that has yet visited this country. It is possible that it does not possess a bowler as deadly as Spofforth, nor a batsman so finished as Murdoch in his prime, nor a wicket-keeper quite the equal of Blackham; but for general excellence in every department of the game, and the extraordinary patience and power displayed in playing an uphill contest, to the visitors of 1899 must undoubtedly be awarded the palm. This cricket season has been an exceptionally fine one for our variable climate; the great majority of the wickets have been hard and true, and very similar to those they are accustomed to at home, where it is absolutely necessary to make the ball "do" something if a side is to be got out for any reasonable score. Probably in a wet season and on difficult wickets we can hold our own in bowling. Good and safe as their batting is, our leading batsmen are, if anything, the stronger; and by a reference to the averages in the five matches played, we fully hold our own in both these departments of the game. But when we look at their fielding we have to give in. Waiving the question of actual catching, their covering the ground and throwing-in are unquestionably more accurate, and naturally the fact of always playing together is an immense

advantage in their favour. In our own cricket this point is often strongly exemplified when a University or even a school eleven are able to defeat an apparently much stronger team individually. Moreover, without wishing to be too critical, there have been occasions when we are forced to acknowledge that in the placing and shifting of the field to suit the play of particular batsmen, as well as in the frequent changes of bowling, our visitors have distinctly proved themselves to be superior tacticians. With the immense amount of county cricket it is almost impossible to select a representative eleven at the beginning of the season, and to let them play together in a series of matches. But when these so-called "test" matches between England and Australia do take place, every step ought to be taken to get the absolutely strongest team possible.'

'It is a great pity that these contests are limited to three days. Surely it would be much fairer and more satisfactory, to the players and spectators alike, if they were each fought out to a finish. Let each one begin on a Monday, which at any rate ensures one day's rest previously. The usual fixture might be arranged for the Thursday, and, should the test match be finished in three days, would take place in the ordinary way. If a fourth day was required, the remaining match at the end of the week would be limited to two days, and might, if unfinished, be decided by the first innings. In fact, with the enormous scores that now are the rule in fine weather on "unnatural" wickets, and the absurd number of unfinished three-day matches, it almost seems better to have a definite issue, and in deciding by the result of the first innings to do away with that most unsatisfactory of all results, a drawn game. With regard to the number of "test" matches to be played, most people will probably agree that *three* are sufficient; this would save any encroachment on county cricket, except in three weeks of the season, and six weeks or two months ought to be allowed before the first takes place, so as to ensure a sufficient time for the candidates to get into their best form, which would make the final selection of the team easier for those to whom it has been entrusted. Thus, assuming the season to begin in May, the first match might be played the last week in June, and that would allow an interval of three weeks or a month before the second and third matches respectively.

'In referring again to the question of drawn matches there are several points to be considered. Everyone is agreed that the present state of things requires alteration, but there is great difference of opinion as to the proper steps to be taken. The change made a few years back in the "follow-on" rule, from 80 to 120 runs behind, has not, on the whole, worked satisfactorily. It is certainly unfair that the side which gained a great lead in the first innings should be compelled to take the field again because their opponents have failed to get within the prescribed limit. This rule probably lost us the fourth test match at Manchester. With the excessive heat prevalent at the time, it was almost impossible for the bowlers and fielders to maintain their powers for two consecutive innings. Surely the time has also arrived for a side to be able to close its innings at any period in the match: its being debarred from doing so till the last day means, in the great majority of cases, cricket without any interest and almost certainly an unfinished game. Then again there is the question of boundaries, which are, of course, absolutely necessary with the crowds of spectators. But why should not the batsmen be obliged to run out their hits so long as the ball keeps within the boundary? If it goes over, well and good, and a four must be scored; but if a low rail or wire-netting (from two to three feet in height) were put up all round, every hit inside that can and ought to be run out. As a matter of fact, at the present day getting a hundred does not entail so much fatigue as fifty did under the old system of running out every hit. W. Caffyn justly remarks in his lately published volume, "71 Not Out," that the batsmen often got blown after running several fourers and sometimes sixers, and lost their wickets in consequence. Now we constantly see them standing still, and perhaps exchanging the time of day with each other, whilst the fielders are retrieving the ball; and as soon as it is returned another fourer is scored off the next ball with equal ease, sometimes, indeed, the whole five balls of the over result in boundary hits. But perhaps the greatest assistance to these gigantic scores, and consequently drawn matches, is the "l.b.w." rule. When the wickets were untrue and bumpy, there was some reason in requiring that the ball must pitch straight to render an appeal fatal to the batsman; but now that by the joint application of mowing-machine, water, and a ponderous roller, all natural life is killed, and the unfortunate bowler handicapped as much as possible, and to get any work on the ball is a matter of great difficulty, it is high time that the rule should be made far more stringent, and that a batsman should be out if he stops with any

part of his person a ball which, in the opinion of the umpire, would have hit the wicket. It has been said that this alteration would put too much responsibility on the umpire, but why, it is difficult to see. At present he has not only to judge whether the ball pitches straight, but also whether it would have hit the wicket. In the proposed alteration he would only have the latter point to decide.'

'Whilst these remarks are drawing to a close, the news arrives of another drawn match. Thus the summary of the "test" matches—which, by the way, are no test at all—comes out as follows: Australia, one win and four draws. There is no getting out of the fact that we have to put up with second place, but at the same time we may fairly claim that had all the five matches been played out, as they ought to have been, we had a reasonable chance of winning the odd event. If these contests are to take place every three or four years (and, judging from the enthusiasm they arouse both here and in Australia, and the enormous crowds they attract, it is probable that cricketers generally will wish for their continuance), let it be a *sine quâ non* in future, whatever other arrangements may be made, that they shall always be fought out to the end. For why should all other representative contests in various branches of sport be decided and those at cricket alone be left unfinished? It is unreasonable and unsatisfactory in every way, and it is more than probable that, were the next series to be limited to three days, the present enthusiasm would give place to a feeling of disgust, so that, instead of the enormous crowds and the intense interest, the cricketers would play to practically empty benches. The following is an extract from a letter just received; it is written by one who witnessed the last match at the Oval, who was the foremost amateur of his day and captained the Gentlemen *v.* Players for many years: "In the Oval match there was *no proper* cricket after Jackson and Hayward had made a draw very nearly certain. I believe our side might have been in the whole of the three days, and am sorry they were not; then, perhaps, people would see the absurdity of present-day cricket. They pour some concoction now out of a fine rose watering-pot on the wickets at the Oval, which makes a sort of enamel paste, and literally nearly every ball is half-stump high only. The game is being fast degraded."'

THE

BADMINTON MAGAZINE

November 1899

THE PHEASANT

BY THE MARQUESS OF GRANBY

WITH the arrival of October the cup of the sportsman's joy is filled to the brim, at any rate as far as shooting is concerned. Then no more troublesome restrictions confine him; no longer has he to hold his hand when, with a noisy rush and whirl, something—for a second he cannot determine whether it be a legally shootable bird or not—rises from the turnips wherein he is patiently pursuing partridges. On and after October 1, until February 2 is reached, he may, if so minded, discharge at whatever in the shape of game comes in his way when out shooting. Occasionally a young pheasant is killed whilst walking up partridges or coming over with grouse when the moor edges are being driven, before the period authorised for its destruction has been attained. But little accidents such as these must occasionally happen in the best regulated establishments, and the too early slain victim is then called a 'brown owl' or christened by some familiar name, while it appears on the game card under the head of 'various.' In any case, however, one cannot help feeling pleased when the pheasant-shooting season is with us, for Phasianus, whether he be Colchicus or Torquatus, is a very worthy bird indeed. Worthy for several reasons. First, because when judiciously managed he is, in my humble judgment at least, the most difficult bird to kill that inhabits these islands. Secondly, because he is excellent on the table, though I own to a

partiality to him when cold rather than when hot. Thirdly, because he is a beautiful bird in appearance, and it is a pleasure to see him strutting about the woods and 'policies' of a country place. What is more attractive to anyone who cares for the signs and sounds of Nature than the various calls and roosting remarks of partridges and pheasants on an autumn or winter's afternoon? In combination with the cawing of homeward-bound rooks and the mellow pipe of the robin—mournful at times though the song of the latter may be—the notes of partridge and pheasant go far towards minimising the effects of the darkness and chill of a winter's evening.

It must be confessed, however, that much as the last-mentioned bird may be appreciated for its other merits, the crow of a pheasant just going to roost is apt, apart from its attractive qualities of quaintness and wildness of sound, to conjure up visions of many a pleasant day spent, and hopes of many another yet to be passed, amongst English woodlands in pursuit of the beautiful bird, while the chatter of the partridge reminds one of the line of guns waiting at the 'ready' for the coveys to flash over the high, rough hedges.

But it is not with the 'little brown bird' that we are now concerned, but rather with his larger, more important, and more expensive rival. In what terms and in what manner shall we enlarge on the merits and eulogise the sporting value of the pheasant? Every year, towards the end of September, the daily newspapers teem with information as to how he should be killed, and how he should be cooked, whilst at the same time instruction is offered touching his habits and customs.

When I say that the newspapers offer advice as to the proper methods of shooting the pheasant, I am bound also to add that their advice is often of a most remarkable nature. The late Mr. Bromley Davenport, in his admirable sketch of 'Covert Shooting,' which is contained in the volume called 'Sport,' refers to an article that appeared some years ago in the columns of one of the best known daily papers, an article I myself well remember. That wonderful production will still be in the recollection of many. In it, amongst many other strange things, sportsmen were advised 'to seek out the rocketer for themselves, and to decline to try their skill upon him when he is driven past them, ducking, calling and chattering, and as helpless as a young duckling making its way to the water.' What more strangely ignorant description of a rocketer, or of shooting a pheasant at all, can possibly be conceived!

JUST GOING TO ROOST

I am bound to say that nowadays an article such as the one from which the above is extracted is very rare indeed; but even now do not most marvellous and awe-inspiring accounts yearly appear of the barbarities and slaughter which are supposed to take place at what are called 'battues'? If half of what one reads in some of the less instructed or more anti-sport inclined newspapers actually took place, shooting in general and pheasant shooting in particular would stand a fair chance of being so universally decried as to run a great risk of coming to an end altogether.

It is satisfactory to think, however, that of late years a more practical knowledge of how shooting is *really* conducted—at any rate, in the very large majority of cases—has been acquired by most of the newspapers, and far fewer articles of the ignorant and mischievous type now appear.

It would be indeed a bad day for English country life if, owing to the untaught and often politically biassed clamour of a small but noisy section of the public, shooting were seriously interfered with. For it is a remarkable thing that those who object to sport, especially shooting, seem altogether to overlook the fact of the large amount of employment which is thereby given regularly to a considerable number of the agricultural population. On a large shooting estate a quantity of men are employed as beaters, quite apart from the accredited staff of keepers and watchers. 'Stops,' again, are required in numbers; and though these are often boys, who for this particular duty are as good as their seniors, still many an old man, desirous of getting his day's pay and his lunch, is taken on, one who could not do the harder work of a beater, which involves making his way through the thick of the tangled covers.

I am aware that the question of *who* benefits by a day's shooting except the host, his guests, and the keepers has often been raised; but it seems to me such an important point in the whole economy of shooting that I venture again to touch on it. I wonder what would be said by the labourers in many parts of the country, and by the fishermen of many a coast village, were they to find their chance of earning half-a-crown a day and their lunch on one, two, or more days a week, for six weeks or so, suddenly destroyed! I fancy their language would be more free than polished.

If an estate is regularly shot over, the agricultural labourer, from the moment the shooting season begins, stands a chance of adding to his ordinary wages to something like the amount

above mentioned. For much of the shooting takes place at a time when the land is not being largely handled, and the labourer is free to earn an addition to his income by becoming a beater. *Pro ratâ*, this applies equally to small as to large shootings. I myself have had considerable experience of personally looking after a small sporting estate, and there it was strongly impressed on me how grateful the labourers were for being enlisted as beaters whenever the very limited opportunities at my command enabled me so to employ them. Again, it seems to be often forgotten how much the residence of an owner on his property means financially to the surrounding neighbourhood. Supplies are then largely purchased in the district; extra hands are engaged from amongst the villagers for both indoor and outdoor service. The stables are the cause of money circulating among the adjacent farmers and dealers; while the coming and going of guests means the employment of flies and station conveyances, and consequent benefit to the landlords and *employés* of the hotels and inns in the country towns.

It is true that the operation of the recent Death Duties Act, coupled with the long-continued agricultural depression, has done much to render it almost impossible for many owners of property to live on their estates; but even under the provisions of that grossly unfair law—unfair because it presses so hardly on the land and consequently on the agricultural industry, that industry which has become so enfeebled during recent years as to be the least able of any to bear additional burdens—there is still a considerable body of country gentlemen who spend most of their time on their own estates, amongst their own people; and to them a little shooting, whether they be in a position to preserve highly or hardly at all, is almost a necessity as a wholesome and pleasant variant to the numerous public duties which most of them undertake, such as attending county councils, parish councils, boards of guardians, petty sessions, and the other many voluntary services they render to their country, for which they receive no pay and scanty thanks. Were the relaxation of country pursuits such as hunting and shooting to be denied them, it would be a very hard case indeed, and would take from many a man the incentive necessary to induce him to continue the struggle with falling rents and bad times, and to remain on his property with the determination to do the best possible by it under the circumstances.

This somewhat lengthy digression has gradually brought me back to within hail of the main subject of this article—namely,

the pheasant. For any reflections on winter shooting must of necessity deal largely with that bird, and the qualifications it possesses for showing sport during the cold and inclement winter months. I have mentioned earlier in my paper that I consider the pheasant to be perhaps the most difficult of all our game birds to shoot, at any rate when properly 'put over' the guns. Probably I shall be told that this is absurd, that an old pheasant flopping about in the air is an easy bird to kill, and not one to tax the skill of even a moderate gunner.

Well, all I can say is that I should recommend anyone who may so criticise, to notice, the next time he gets a chance, the relative speed of a partridge and a pheasant when both these birds are 'coming over' in the course of a partridge drive. Should the pheasant have time to get into full swing, with a bit of a breeze behind him, he will catch up the quicker starting partridge and pass him, much as a torpedo-catcher overhauls an old tramp steamer.

Now if this rapidity of flight is scientifically utilised by those administering a day's pheasant shooting, it must of necessity follow that to kill properly—or indeed at all—such a quickly moving bird becomes anything but an easy task.

There are, I need hardly say, many places where it does not seem to strike either owners or keepers that a 'tall' pheasant is an infinitely more desirable bird to kill than one which comes flustering close overhead, receiving probably a charge of shot which blows half of it away, thereby rendering it unfit for table use.

But these places are, I trust, becoming fewer and fewer in number. Knowledge as to how matters should be managed is now so easily attainable, that no excuse on this head can be entertained; and given average opportunities, it should be generally possible to get pheasants, whether they be few or many in number, brought to the guns at a fair height at any rate, so as to afford sportsmanlike sport and comparatively difficult shooting.

There are many ways by which this may be accomplished, even in the flattest of countries. Wherever there is a fair-sized field of roots or any good cover—but turnips for choice—adjoining the wood to be shot, should it not be practicable, owing to the conformation and lie of the plantation, to get the pheasants to come high enough to be worth shooting therein, and should there be no other wood adjacent to which to drive them, then the following method is one which generally yields good results and interesting shooting.

Instead of some of the beaters walking in the fields before the sport begins so as to put the strayed pheasants into the wood, the object of the head-keeper should rather be to get as many birds as possible into the fields. The beaters are then stationed so as to work the fields towards the cover as soon as the signal to start is given. Meanwhile the guns are posted sixty or seventy yards from the plantation, with their backs toward it, so that the pheasants may see them clearly the moment they rise. The birds will then at once begin to get up as high as possible so as to avoid their unwelcome visitors, and by this means, especially if there be some high trees in the cover, extremely pretty sporting shots are usually obtained.

The question which naturally obtrudes itself is, 'Why don't the pheasants, when they see the line of guns and hear the first shots, break out right and left or go back over the line of beaters?' The answer is a simple one—viz. the pheasant, whether he be artificially reared or wild bred, is essentially a 'homing' bird, and one that will always, if possible, make for his accustomed haunts when disturbed. If there be no cover handy with which he is well acquainted, he will prefer trying to get to his shelter by flying high over the guns rather than risk a journey into the unknown by breaking back over the beaters. This reason applies also to his course of proceeding when a slightly different plan of shooting an exactly similar piece of ground is adopted. Instead of the beaters walking the fields where the pheasants are *up* to the guns, in this case the guns walk the fields up to the beaters, who should be withdrawn one hundred yards or so back from the hedge on the side of the field furthest from the cover, so as by their presence there to still further urge the birds to return to their usual home. The pheasants will then, as a rule at any rate, after flying forward a short way, begin to mount rapidly, and swinging right and left come back over the guns high and with a 'curl,' which is an additional aid to missing. This they do because they are anxious to seek the well-known shelter of the wood whence they are being driven.

This latter plan of shooting cannot be satisfactorily carried out, however, if there is any other cover near to which the pheasants are accustomed to roam, as then, instead of 'coming back,' many will go forward, and be of little use at that moment.

One of the most beautiful pieces of shooting with which I am acquainted illustrates in a striking degree the advantages which sometimes accrue from driving pheasants directly *away* from the guns and from the cover which is their habitat. The scene is

Henry Stannard, R.B.A.

placed in the south of England, close to the sea, at a spot where the high ridge of down land ends abruptly about half a mile from the coast. Two woods furnish the day's shooting. Of these the larger one lies nestled close to the shore, separated from the smaller by two or three rough fields. The cover from which the 'rise' in question takes place is the last mentioned. This is a rough wild wood with good undercover, lying on the side of the downs and reaching about half-way up them. In the morning it is walked towards the larger cover, no pheasants being killed except those which break out right and left or go back. In this case the birds willingly fly or run over to the other wood, it being very 'contagious,' as the Irishman said, and no guns or stops being put forward to head them, they are not in any way prevented from carrying out their intention. Moreover, as most of these birds are bred in the larger cover they naturally make their way back to their original home. Two or three flushes take place in the big wood, after which the hanging cover again becomes the theatre of the operations, and it is then that the rise occurs, to the nature of which I am anxious to draw the reader's attention. All the time the shooting in the main wood has been going on, the principal object has been to push the bulk of the pheasants over to the hill-side cover; and to further this the guns have spared any low-flying birds which may have been going in that direction. In fact, every possible plan is adopted by which the pheasants may be persuaded to go back to the small wood on the downs.

If all goes well and the manœuvres are successful, then that copse has many birds in it for the final and eagerly anticipated climax of the day.

And what a rise it is! Curious in fashion; admirably executed! For the beaters are all picked men, fishermen from the neighbouring coast villages, and are almost without exception the best drilled and organised body of beaters I have ever seen. One secures as beautiful a piece of difficult high shooting as is to be found anywhere in England.

I have used the expression 'curious in fashion' for the following reason. It will be remembered that the position of this particular cover has been described as lying on the side of a hill, trending downwards towards the fields which separate it from the main wood. The hill overtops it considerably on the further side.

The *ordinary* way of shooting it would be to put the beaters in on the top or landward side, and bring it downhill over the

guns who line the fields between the two woods. But not so are matters managed here—a far better plan is adopted.

It is this. All round the cover, on the hills which encircle it, at distances varying from one to two hundred yards, are trusty stops armed with flags, and to their proper placing much of the success of the rise depends. Everything being in readiness, the beaters start to work the cover in an almost semicircular fashion, *uphill* and *away* from the line of guns. At first many of the pheasants as soon as they clear the trees fly towards the down country, being 'pushed' in that direction by the line of men behind them; but no sooner do they perceive the flagmen on the hill tops and sides than they begin to swing back over the beaters and make for their familiar home in the larger woods. In so doing they attain that 'curl' which renders accurate shooting so difficult; and when to this is added the fact that nearly every pheasant is a really 'tall' bird, quick and deadly aim is indeed essential. In addition, so many of them are 'sailing'—*i.e.* moving with still wings—that yet another difficulty is presented to the gunner. As these pheasants rise from ground considerably above the level of that whereon the guns are standing, by the time they are within shooting distance, what with their height, their 'curl,' and their 'sailing' propensities, they completely fulfil the requirements necessary to qualify them as thoroughly 'good' birds; and thus the day ends with a piece of shooting which taxes to the full the skill and accuracy of the sportsmen.

Now consider: if the usual method of beating a cover had been pursued, and the pheasants driven straight down to the guns, although, no doubt, many of them would have flown high, very few would have equalled the performances of those flushed in the manner I have just attempted to describe. A considerable number would, moreover, have run down to the low end of the copse and only risen when the beaters were near them, thereby presenting much easier and less sporting shots; whereas by beating the cover *away* from the guns in the semicircular manner above detailed, this is largely, if not entirely, obviated. Thus by bringing to bear knowledge of the habits of birds and skill in sporting affairs, coupled with admirable beating and management, additional charm is given to a day's shooting, and a higher quality of marksmanship is required from those fortunate enough to be participators in the sport.

Of course, when covers are shot in a manner such as this, there should be a fair sprinkling of ground game; for except the main

rise, there are only two or three others of comparatively minor importance, and consequently there would be rather long intervals with but little shooting did not the invaluable rabbit lend his aid. But in this case he is greatly to the fore, and guns are kept going briskly till the final scene in the sporting drama is reached.

At the risk of being considered prolix, I have cited at some length this example of how a day's pheasant shooting in woods somewhat difficult to beat should be managed, because it is an instance of where knowledge of woodcraft and a sense of how this sort of shooting *ought* to be conducted are pre-eminently necessary; and it is only by a conjunction of these acquirements that such satisfactory results are achieved.

But it is not always that a counsel of perfection in shooting affairs is reached. Far otherwise indeed! Even in these days of instruction in all the arts of sport it is a common occurrence to find a head-keeper trying to force pheasants out of a corner of an isolated cover over guns placed in the field outside. Unless there is some other wood or spinney within reasonable hail, this is, in nine out of ten cases, a useless and irritating performance. The pheasants instead of going forward fly back into the wood, and the only persons who get any sport or enjoyment are the guns fortunate enough to be posted 'back' in the cover. What few birds *do* go forward are usually low-flying skimming ones, to shoot which gives but little pleasure to anybody. Instead of trying to get the pheasants forward over the open country, the keeper should have halted the whole line when within proper distance of the corner to which he had been driving his birds, taken the beaters out of the wood, and, having placed his guns in convenient open spaces *inside*—not outside—the cover, have brought the pheasants back towards their accustomed haunts. By this means they would have risen well, and flying high, so as to clear the trees, have afforded good and interesting sport. Thus the bag would have been heavier, and the gunners instead of being idle would have had a busy and enjoyable time.

To attempt to coerce pheasants into taking a long flight away from their homes, into a strange and unexplored country, is generally a most unprofitable proceeding. They simply *won't* go; and keepers should study this fact, for many of them seem unable to appreciate it in the least.

Whenever the subject of pheasants or pheasant shooting is mooted, some remarks are nearly always made, some question asked, as to what number of killed in the course of a day should be considered to constitute an average and satisfactory bag. It

is not in my power to answer any such inquiries. For some localities will, by reason of the nature of the soil, the sparseness of population and other causes, produce and maintain a large head of game, whereas in similarly sized areas in other parts of the country it is found impossible to show half the quantity. A good day's shooting in one place may mean a bad day in another; but be the numbers killed great or small, I am certain that no day's cover shooting can be considered really satisfactory which does not combine several essential characteristics.

For example, there should not be too many guns—a surplusage of guests means discomfort, extra danger, a certain amount of jealousy even among the best of shots, sometimes two or three people firing at the same bird, and a feeling of general discomfort. The beaters should be drilled to keep their line and their places in it, to hold their tongues and use their sticks. Well-drilled beaters mean properly managed shooting. The pheasants should be brought over the guns as high as the nature of the ground will permit; and last, but not least, the host should take care that each of his guests gets his fair share of shooting.

If these matters are properly attended to, then it may be safely averred that the size of the bag will not be of such moment to those who participate in the sport as it would have been had it been conducted in a slovenly and unworkmanlike fashion, and that the day's amusement will have been heartily enjoyed.

One thing more. I cannot help thinking that while shooting is now usually carried on in a way far more satisfactory to the man who cares about real sport than was formerly the case, there is nevertheless a tendency on the part of some great game preservers to attempt to rear more pheasants than the land will healthily maintain.

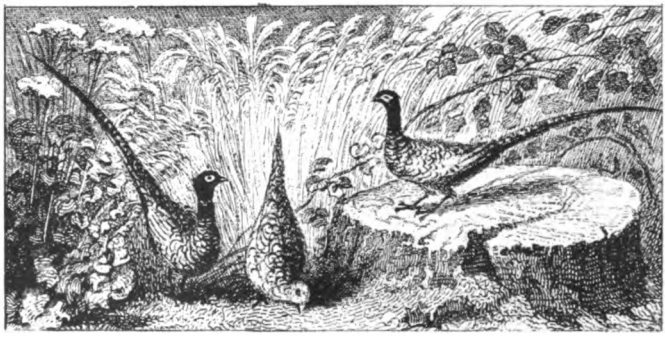
I am constantly hearing of an enormous hatch out, and then after a few weeks I am told that the young birds are not doing well, that some queer and unknown disease has attacked them and that they are dying in scores. The coops have been placed on perfectly fresh ground, so nothing can be attributed to foul, stale soil. It does appear that insufficient attention is often paid to the amount of game which it would seem advisable to have on the different portions of an estate, and that over-production or over-population is often as disastrous in the case of game as it is in that of human beings.

Much might be written on this branch of the subject did

space permit. So in ending these lines in a sense similar to that in which they began, let us hail with gratitude golden autumn, not only on account of the wealth of the earth-gifts it has brought in its train, but also because in that season we are enabled to fully enjoy—I trust with appreciative moderation—those sports which our country affords us—country sports injuring none, certainly benefiting many, and helping to attach Englishmen to their homes. Let us also regard winter with friendly eyes. For do not those who love the gun derive keen and constant pleasure from its advent?

Then let us not bewail the flight of summer, but rather let us be glad that once again we become cognisant that

Boughs are daily rifled
By the gusty thieves,
And the book of Nature
Getteth short of leaves.



A PAINTED MULE[1]

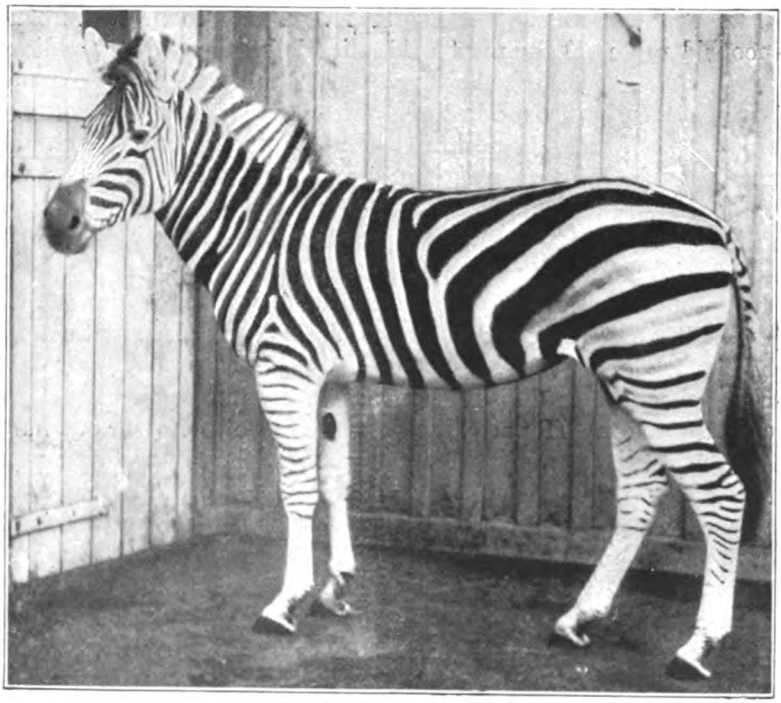
BY R. B. TOWNSHEND

'As pretty as a painted mule' used to be the very highest form in which an enthusiastic cowboy could express his feelings in the presence of any object that fired his imagination. Mules, generally speaking, are not gay to look at, but are ˙lued in tone: as a rule you find them of a sober brown or of a quaker-like mouse colour, without any conspicuous white stockings or blazed face, or even so much as a white star in the forehead, to attract attention. Consequently the advent at distant intervals of some phenomenal specimen of the long-eared, slim-tailed offspring of the jackass and the mare, rejoicing in those picturesquely clouded roan markings that gain for it among the artist-souled Mexicans the envied title of a 'mula pinta,' or 'painted mule,' never failed to evoke the liveliest appreciation in the breast of the cowpuncher. Rare indeed was such an animal, and the value set upon it corresponded to the rarity of the phenomenon.

But now a new order of painted mules has arisen, and to all appearance they have come to stay. Professor Cossar Ewart, of

[1] It is altogether a departure from the custom of this Magazine to admit any illustration that has appeared elsewhere; but an exception is made here, as these portraits, published by the courtesy of Messrs. Black, are the best, and indeed the only ones, obtainable.—Ed.

Edinburgh, a distinguished Scotch man of science, has started breeding what he terms 'zebrules'—that is to say, mules of which the sire is not the common jackass but the male zebra. He was led to undertake the enterprise by a desire to carry out on his property at Penicuik in the Pentlands a series of scientific experiments with a view to testing the much-debated question as to whether or not the first sire ever exercises any visible influence over the subsequent progeny of his mate by another sire, an influence known to science as 'telegony.' With this object in



MATOPO

view he procured from Antwerp a fine full-grown specimen of Burchell's zebra, which was said to have been caught in or near the Transvaal, and he appropriately named him Matopo, after the range of hills where the Matabele warriors defended themselves so long against the whites. Matopo is a splendid animal, with excellent action both in trotting and galloping. His withers are low like those of a jackass, but in spite of that he stands nearly thirteen hands high. His neck is fine for a zebra; he has good quarters, and carries his tail more like a horse than an ass. His

skin is dark, while the ground colour of the hair is a light dun varying from cream colour to nearly white; he is beautifully banded all over with stripes, broad on the body and neck, narrow on the legs, which in tone are black or all but black during the summer. There are some admirable photographs of him to be seen in the book entitled 'The Penicuik Experiments,' published by Messrs. Black, in which Professor Ewart has described with much detail the course of his proceedings, and to which we are indebted for the greater part of the information contained in this article.

The difficulties that Professor Ewart had to meet were not inconsiderable. Like most wild animals Matopo was exceedingly timid, and, considering that from the beginning of time zebras in South Africa have lived in hourly dread of being suddenly pounced on by a lion, there is nothing to be surprised at in this. His extreme caution was sometimes amusing to watch, but when panic led him to dash himself blindly against anything that came in his way it was decidedly dangerous. Once, when he refused to go back to his box, his owner threw a rug over him. Evidently the result on the zebra's mind was the idea that the lion he had all his life gone in fear of had got him at last. In frantic terror he dashed round the yard, charging headlong into a mare that stood there and nearly knocking her over, and colliding violently with the fence. Happily, however, he came to no serious harm. Another thing, too, of which he stood in the greatest awe was a rope; the mere sight of one was enough to produce alarm, and if a rope were brought into contact with his legs he would actually drop on his knees or even fall down. Probably he had been roped with great severity by the Boer hunters who caught him, and Western men know well how a 'broncho' who has been frequently lassoed learns to dread the slightest touch of the riata.

As Matopo's owner only intended to use him for breeding purposes no attempt was made to break him to harness or to saddle, a process which must inevitably have involved no small risk to so scarce and valuable an animal. Little would have been gained by running the risk, for there was no need to prove that zebras can be tamed; long ago in the 'sixties, Rarey, the famous horse-tamer from Ohio, broke the zebra at the Zoological Gardens in London to saddle, and rode him in Rotten Row. At the present day there is a well-known team of four zebras which is regularly driven around with Barnum's circus, and for some time a coach in the Transvaal was actually horsed with mixed teams of zebras and mules. Many of our readers may remember

a photograph which was reproduced in the *Field* some time ago, showing the coach standing in the street with the zebras in harness. Matopo himself, though unbroken, has become so quiet to handle that his stud-groom can haul him around by the tail if he wants to move him to one side or the other in his box, which is more than can be done with many horses. The experience of the Transvaal stable-helpers with the zebras which were worked in the coach was that they were not harder to handle than wild unbroken horses. When enraged, however, their natural impulse was not to kick but to bite. Biting is Matopo's method of attack, and the only time when it is unsafe to approach him is when he is loose with a band of mares, under which circumstances he acts exactly like a wild horse, who is ever ready to do battle in defence of his harem.

There was considerable difficulty over the first introduction of Matopo to his equine relatives. On both sides no small fear was manifested. Horses seemed to look upon this novel and gaily striped animal as a fearfully active and alarming kind of tiger, and their terror was redoubled when they heard the peculiar call of 'quacha, quacha,' to which he gave utterance. Even so high-couraged a creature as an Arab stallion was frightened very badly by the zebra's cry.

Nor was Matopo himself much less alarmed at his first meeting with one of the horse tribe at close quarters. When a Highland pony was put into the yard with him he actually ran away from her, put his tail between his legs, took refuge in a corner, and uttered low cries of terror. This was rather disheartening for a beginning, so Professor Ewart decided to select something less likely to terrify him. The Highland pony was quite as big as the zebra or bigger, but there are Shetland ponies that do not much exceed a large dog in height. Thinking that one of these diminutive specimens would look less formidable in his eyes, Professor Ewart turned Matopo loose with a very plucky little Sheltie named Sheila, in order to see if Matopo would get over his terrors. The undaunted Sheltie at once went for the zebra and bullied him well, until at last, like a timid boy who has been goaded too far, the zebra turned on his tormentor and began to retaliate. Greatly to her surprise, he tried to bite her legs and so bring her to the ground, and by this means he considerably discomfited her at first. Soon, however, Miss Sheila learned the trick, and she bit at her antagonist's legs valiantly till she brought him to his knees in turn.

Anyone who has ever watched a lot of frolicsome Mexican

burros playing together will recognise at once that this leg-biting performance is the regular game indulged in by members of the ass tribe whenever they feel frisky.

Matopo and Sheila waged this mimic war for a couple of hours and then made it up and were very good friends, and the zebra's alarm at the horse species grew much less. Nevertheless he still showed himself exceedingly shy of all large specimens of it. Professor Ewart had collected for the purpose of his experiments several mares of different breeds, among which was an Irish mare nearly thoroughbred. This latter was the first animal above his own size that Matopo would trust himself near. She was a bay with black points, and stood a hand and a half taller than the zebra. One day, as an experiment, Professor Ewart fastened a cloth over her eyes and tied her up in a small yard and turned Matopo loose. For a long time the zebra could not summon up courage to approach this creature which was so much bigger than himself, but after a while he grew braver and made up his mind to go closer. At last he got so bold as to venture to lay his head first across her croup and then across her withers, and he stood thus for quite a while. Then he licked her lips, and finally indulged in a gentle nibble at her ears. Having by this process satisfied himself that even a large-sized specimen of the horse species was not after all anything very dreadful to deal with, he left her in peace and went back to his box to finish his corn.

In this manner, by the exercise of great patience and judgment, Professor Ewart succeeded finally in overcoming Matopo's timorousness, and in getting him perfectly reconciled to the society of his equine cousins.

Undoubtedly the task which Professor Ewart had set himself was by no means an easy one, but it must be remembered that Matopo was bred in the wilderness, and was a full-grown animal when the attempt was first made to get him used to the company of horses. A zebra colt, bred in captivity, and brought up, if possible, with a mare for a foster-mother, would give no such trouble, but would freely associate with horses from the very beginning as one of themselves. It is an interesting fact that at the very time that Professor Ewart undertook these experiments in Europe, another man, on the other side of the Atlantic, Baron de Parana, was trying to do the same thing on his estate in Brazil, where he succeeded at last in crossing a Burchell's zebra with a mare of Brazilian stock. What that stock is we are not informed, but we may probably assume that

it is derived from the horses originally introduced into America by the Spaniards, and so resembles the 'broncho' stock commonly found in Texas and on the Pacific slope. It would be a good idea for similar experiments to be made by breeders of horses in America and elsewhere. Countries like California and Australia, where the climate is peculiarly suited to horse-raising, and where many men of capital and intelligence are the owners of stud-farms, would be ideal places for trying the value of zebrules. But they might be bred almost anywhere.

ROMULUS AND HIS DAM MULATTO

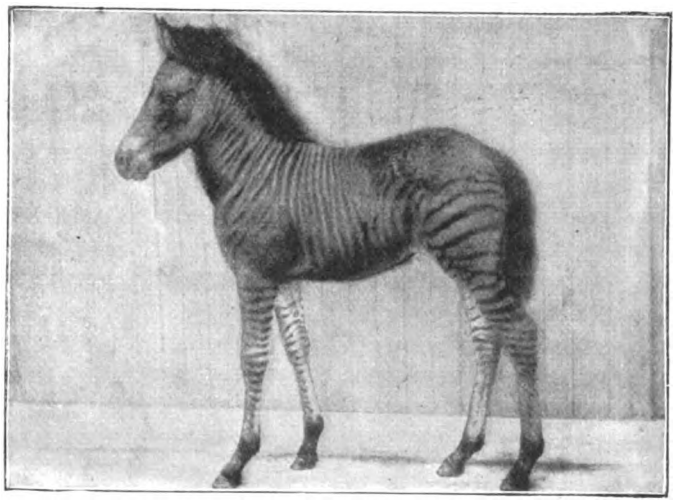
It says much for the hardy character of the zebra that Matopo himself stands the climate of Scotland so well. Considering that he was bred in a climate as warm, say, as that of southern Mexico, and is now living and keeping in capital condition in one hardly less rigorous than that of northern Maine, the wonder is that he survives at all. The Pentland Hills are bleak and exposed, and parts of the farm where the experiments are being carried on lie no less than 700 feet above sea level. Professor Ewart allows his young stock, and most of his brood-mares, to run out here all winter in a large field, in which, however, there

are sheds to which they can resort for shelter during storms, and he is careful to supply them with abundant food. Under these conditions his various New Forest, Exmoor, Shetland, Iceland, Norwegian, and Highland ponies all do well, and the same thing may be said of a half-Arab mare and a small Clydesdale. His thoroughbred mares, however, cannot stand the exposure, and have to be stabled; the zebrules are hardy enough to run out all winter like the ponies.

The first zebrule the Professor was successful in obtaining made his appearance on the scene in the summer of 1896, the dam being a West Highland pony of the Isle of Rum strain. The name given to this most interesting little creature was Romulus. He was a perfect beauty. His coat was profusely marked with stripes, of which, curiously enough, he had more even than his father, and the colour of his body was a bright golden yellow, while the stripes were a rich dark brown. No tiger could be more gaily painted, and he shone in the sun like satin. The name of tiger-horse, applied by the Romans to the zebra, would have been even more applicable to the zebrule at this stage of his existence. What 'painted mule' was ever foaled that could compare with him? His owner declares that he combined all the grace and beauty of an antelope with that of a well-bred Arab foal.

Romulus exhibited a great deal of the zebra in his character, and this inherited quality was especially manifest in the extreme alertness of his movements. Whenever anything alarmed him he was off like a shot. When the rug fell upon Matopo's back, the first idea, as we saw, that came into his mind was that the lion had got him. And similarly Romulus seemed to be born with the idea that the lion would certainly get him unless he darted away like lightning from any danger that might suddenly present itself. Apart from this excessive liability to panic, there was no sort of difficulty about taming the zebrule; he seems to have had no vice; he readily learned to lead anywhere, and would allow any of his feet to be picked up, and when a little more than a year old he was quite willing to let a small boy mount him. His height at eighteen months old was nearly twelve hands, and he promised to develop into a fine sturdy animal. If other zebrules are like him in disposition, the one and only anxiety they will cause to the breaker will be their scariness. But it seems quite possible that this may be overcome by skill and patience, as has happened in the case of Barnum's zebra four-in-hand.

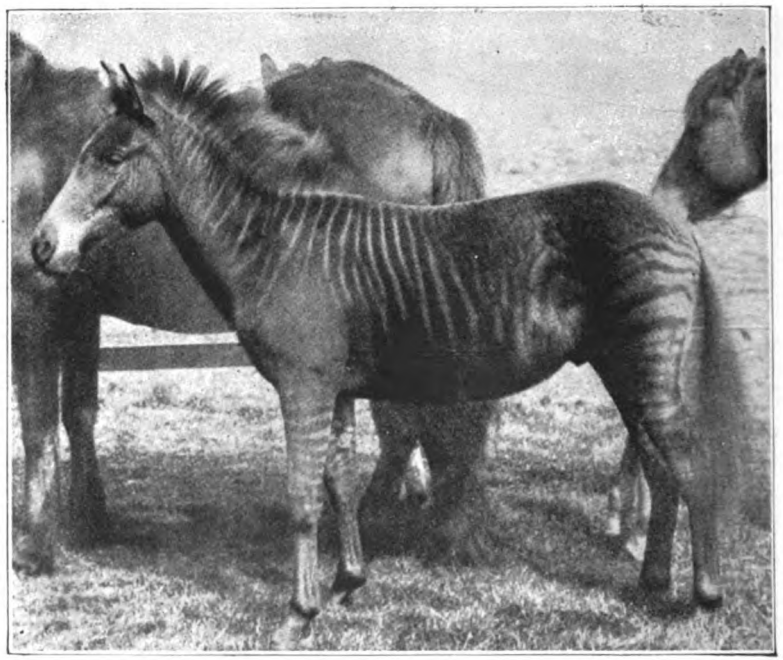
There does not appear to be any reason why Romulus should not have an indefinitely large number of successors. In 1897 four zebrules were produced at Penicuik, and one of these, whose dam was a Shetland pony, is described as being in beauty and in brilliancy of colouring almost an exact replica of Romulus. As Professor Ewart's principal object in the Penicuik experiments is to see if an authentic case of telegony can be satisfactorily established, he makes no attempt to obtain a second zebrule from a mare that has once produced a colt by Matopo, but breeds horse-colts from her instead, in order to see if they will show any signs of zebra markings. But, if any owner of a stud-farm were



ROMULUS, TWENTY-SEVEN DAYS OLD

so disposed, it looks as if there need be hardly any more difficulty about breeding zebrules on a large scale than is now experienced in breeding mules. Carl Hagenbeck, or Jamrach, could doubtless supply zebra sires in any number required, nor would the price to be paid for them in all probability exceed that now demanded for the large Kentucky jacks or the *baudets* of Poitou. It is uncertain at present whether zebra sires will prove to be permanently necessary. This must be the case if zebrules are doomed, like mules, to sterility; but if, on the contrary, as is quite possible, they prove to be fertile *inter se*, or even able to breed with either of their original parent stocks, an intermediate race between the zebra and the horse may perhaps be established. Fertile hybrids are already known to have been produced between the zebra and

the ass. These, however, have none of the beauty of the zebrule, and are credited with even more than the superfluous share of obstinacy possessed by the ass. When the Penicuik zebrules come to maturity it is the intention of Professor Ewart to put their fertility to the test. The next few years will, if no accident happens, see the problem solved in one way or the other.



ROMULUS, ONE YEAR OLD

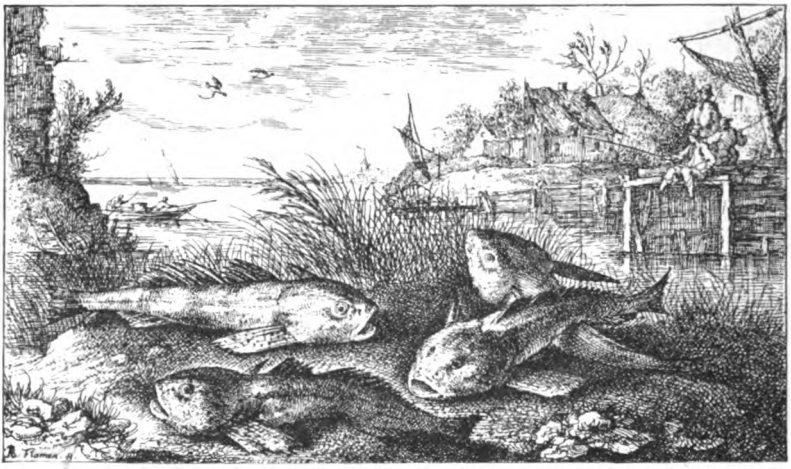
The question may be asked, apart from the great scientific interest of Professor Ewart's researches, what can be the use of breeding zebrules? Is it not enough that we possess already in the common mule the most generally useful of beasts of burden?

In answer to this it may be said that there are several reasons why breeders should take a serious and practical interest in the matter.

To begin with, then, apart from his beauty, although that by itself may be considered to possess a certain market value, there can be little doubt that the zebrule promises to rival his cousin the mule in powers of endurance. A good judge of horses has described Romulus in an agricultural newspaper (*The Scottish Farmer*) as 'a bonnie colt with rare quality of bone . . .

and with the dainty step and dignity of a zebra,' and the editor of the same paper declared that he would be invaluable for riding and driving on account of his hardiness. Hardiness of constitution, and quality of bone, are the two chief factors in the value of the common mule; but the one notorious drawback to his usefulness is his proverbial obstinacy. Any man who has ever attempted to chase wild cattle on muleback knows how impossible it is to get even the best of mules to use his speed in order to head a runaway cow, or to turn and twist after her in her devious course. Capital mount as a good mule is for a journey upon the road, he is apt to become instantly and exasperatingly useless in any emergency where quick obedience to the rein is demanded. Should the zebrule prove, as seems likely, to take after the horse in docility while equalling the mule in hardiness, that alone would suffice to constitute his *raison d'être*.

But it is in Africa that the part to be played before long by the zebrule is likely to be of the very greatest importance. Almost every traveller in South Africa has had bitter experience of the terrible horse-sickness so mysteriously prevalent there. No remedy for it has ever been discovered, and nineteen out of twenty of the animals attacked by it die. Military operations are sadly hampered by this disastrous form of disease, and agriculture and commerce suffer no less. Any horses, however, which have once had it and recovered become immune, or 'salted' as the Africanders call it, and are ever afterwards proof against the justly dreaded scourge. As the zebra, who is indigenous to those regions, is never known to be affected by the fatal disease, it is highly probable that zebrules may also be to a great extent immune. If this be so, the most paralysing of the many difficulties that beset the path of the African farmer will be solved for good. There may yet be a great future before the 'painted mule.'



THE GENTLE ART MODERNISED

BY HAROLD MACFARLANE

THOSE followers of Izaak Walton who imagine, when they have used the rod, line, net and harpoon, that they have practically exhausted every known method of capturing the wily vertebrate of the lowest class are, as we shall proceed to show, labouring under a delusion, though we admit that the tools mentioned accomplish the object of the wielder with greater expedition than some that we shall refer to below, of which, perhaps, only a tithe can be looked upon as legitimate apparati.

Although the law of France expressly forbids the use of explosives for the purposes of destroying fish in riparian waters under divers penalties, embracing both imprisonment and fines, the practice has grown to such an extent that genuine sportsmen are invoking the aid of the law for the purpose of suppressing the dynamitards, who perhaps will not require any legal assistance should Fate step in as she did last October, when five young colliers living in a village in the Rhondda Valley met with a deplorable accident whilst handling a ball of dynamite and a fuse, with which they intended to destroy the fish in a mountain stream, but which exploded in their hands, doing grievous damage. The only occasion when the use of dynamite for fishing purposes appeared in any way legitimate was when the men in the United

States fleet off Havana destroyed sharks—so it is said—by attaching a piece of pork to a small dynamite cartridge; this in turn was connected by a wire to an electric machine, the current from which was turned on at the precise moment the shark took the bait, with the result that that particular member of the carnivorous group *Selachoidei* had a violent attack of indigestion, or was blown to pieces. According to all accounts a small portion of embalmed beef as served out as rations to the army would have been equally efficacious as a destroying angel, and less violent.

A few days testing of the big guns at Forts Wadsworth and Hamilton, situated on either side of the Narrows leading into New York Harbour, were said to have had an extraordinary effect upon the fish market of that city; but in view of the fact that the tide brought in tons of fish that had been stunned by the concussion, which fish could be and were collected by anyone who desired, the state of affairs is not altogether surprising. This method of fishing is, however, unlikely, through lack of forts and big guns, to grow popular with amateurs, nor are we likely to see the gentle angler proceeding to the deep pools where his finny victims lurk, armed with a rifle, notwithstanding that an Italian officer, Major Michelini, when experimenting with the weapon that proved so ineffectual at Adowa, enjoyed good sport, in the sense of a weighty creel, by firing into water stocked with fish at an angle of 45 deg. The rifle used was 6·5 millimetres in diameter, and on firing it a dead fish immediately rose to the surface, undoubtedly killed by the shock arising from the impact of the bullet with the water, as no wound could be discovered upon it; the effect of the shock, it was calculated from many experiments, was sufficient to kill all fish within two to two and a half feet from the point of impact; trout shooting and salmon driving, however, are unlikely to become fashionable.

Early this June the barque 'Passe Partout' had to put into Kragero on account of a leak occasioned by the ship's copper bottom being pierced by a sword-fish, part of whose weapon was found embedded in a five-inch plank; this not very successful method of fishing is unlikely to attract many imitators—for although the patience of the fisherman is proverbial, the method leaves too much to pure luck and too little to science to appeal to the true sportsman—such an one must have cringed when he read last November that the steamer plying between New Ross and Waterford 'literally cut its way through herrings for some miles, continually throwing out from its paddle-wheels

numbers of fish to a distance of eight or ten feet'—a pitiful sight, even when the victim as a provider of sport is almost a nonentity. Needless to add, herrings were a halfpenny a dozen at Waterford that day. The second-class cruiser 'Arrogant' when voyaging from Vigo to Gibraltar, rammed a whale last autumn, a feat which was also accomplished by the Orkney mail steamer 'Stola' early this summer; the shock of impact in the first instance upset the men's grog, which was being served out at that moment, a fact that would give undoubted satisfaction to the whale, who possesses as a race strong temperance proclivities.

If the larger cetacea continue to mix themselves up to their obvious disadvantage with second-class cruisers and mail-packets, the saying 'As stupid as a whale' will assuredly arise, and once it does come into being the cetacean race will have as little capacity to shake it off as that member of the family, discovered by the crew of the cable ship 'Norseman' in August 1897, had of disentangling itself from the very pretty 'night line' it discovered and proceeded to mix itself up with, off Cape Frio. When the cable in question was brought up to the surface, the whale, which had, it was thought, been there a fortnight or three weeks, and which measured fourteen feet across the tail, came with it; as the cable had not parted, notwithstanding the creature's efforts to escape from its environment, and the unpleasant attentions of divers sharks, it gained for itself a reputation as fishing tackle that would be hard to beat.

Some people, who have no inclination that way, are forced to become anglers whether they like the sport or not; we do not so much refer to those who, like the crew of a schooner caught in the terrible gale that swept over the West Indies last year, and, deprived of food, had to take a spoke out of the captain's bicycle, bend it into a hook, and fish for a shark, but rather to those fortunate people who are forced into being fishermen by the action of the fish themselves. Last year, for instance, a youth sleeping by the open window of a houseboat moored near Windsor was awakened from a refreshing sleep by something striking him full on the mouth in the most ungentlemanly manner: this 'something' resolved itself into a flapping, jumping carp; but before the awakened sleeper could secure a firm grip of the athletic member of the genus *Cyprinus*, it had taken a leap for, and secured, its freedom. A pike, weighing three pounds, that performed a similar high jump early in August 1897, was less fortunate; for, alighting in the midst of a boating party on the river Welland at Stamford, thereby causing considerable

commotion among the feminine element, it was caught and, doubtless, eaten—the fate of a great dog-fish, a species of smaller shark, that elected to come, though uninvited, on board the first-class cruiser 'Amphitrite' when that vessel was making her trials in a heavy sea early this year. The little stranger washed on board measured upwards of five feet, and when cooked was greatly appreciated by those gourmets whose palates were educated up to that article of diet.

As far as we are aware, it was never the lot of the gentle Izaak to have to cogitate upon the question 'How should a flying fish be approached with the idea of capture—with a gun or a butterfly net?' The *Exocœtus volitans* is so rarely met with in British waters, that it was perhaps excusable for the wayfarer, who noticed, one day in September 1898, a fish leap from the Medway at Rochester and fly along the surface, to aim a blow at it with his walking-stick, instead of playing the fish in the approved manner—if there is one. The blow, carefully aimed, took fatal effect, and the visitor measured its fifteen inches of length in death. It is an unwise fish that is lured by the hot weather to visit strange waters; such actions have the habit of attracting an amount of attention that must be most unwelcome, as witness the August appearances of the members of the *Hydridæ* family, which nowadays meet with so much derision that they are no longer worth keeping up.

It is not the lot of everyone to be able to capture a three-pound jack by piercing it through the head with a punt pole, a feat Mr. H. C. Miéville accomplished quite by chance last July, when punting from Staines to Windsor, so to those fishermen who are weary of captures made with rod or line, we recommend a really bad flood as a good and yet fairly novel method of capturing fish with ease. When, after the floods of June 1897, the Seine rapidly subsided, the little island in the vicinity of the Pont Neuf, Paris, was, it was said, literally covered with stranded fish of all sorts and sizes, which not only gave the lie to those cynics who declare that no fish could live in Parisian waters, but provided splendid sport to a large crowd of street urchins who captured the unfortunate finny tribe in their hands. Again, when, last November, the water that flooded hundreds of acres of land in the lower reaches of the Esk subsided, a large number of salmon were found stranded in the fields, an even more grievous sight, considering the majesty of the fish, than that reported from Sandwich in July last when, after a severe thunderstorm, thousands of dead eels were seen floating in the Delf stream,

killed either by the electricity from the lightning or poisoned by the artificial manures washed from the land into the river by the storm's attendant downpour.

It is not given to every angler to have the good fortune to enjoy the strange experience that befell a votary of the rod and line at Duddingston Loch, Midlothian, last March—namely, to make a cast at what looked to be an otter, and discover, on landing the catch, that it was a hare; but some strange captures are made at times that are even more remarkable than the old carriage umbrella that divers members of the Piscatorial Society played at Elstree Reservoir, under the impression that it was a pike, an impression evidently shared by many others, judging from the amount of broken tackle with which it was found to be literally covered. For instance, a fisherman some three years ago, who imagined that he was about to deprive the river Nene of one of its largest inhabitants, found on landing his catch that he had captured a young otter, which he promptly killed; whilst a smack, trawling off Dungeness a year last April, had the felicity of bringing to the surface a full-grown Woolwich torpedo. It is not everyone, moreover, who can boast of casting a deep-sea lead into ninety fathoms of the troubled waters off the West African coast and bringing up a spade guinea on the tallow, a feat reported of a quartermaster in the employ of the West African Steam Navigation Company, and one that was recently eclipsed by a youth who fished up one hundred and thirty-six coppers in one hundred and thirty-six casts, though his tackle consisted of only a gummed stick. Certainly the latter fisherman enjoyed a more favourable field in which to ply his art than fell to the lot of the quartermaster; for, as was explained to Mr. Dickinson, who tried the case, he was caught poaching in the strictly preserved waters of a gas company's automatic penny-in-the-slot meter.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A FOX-HOUND

BY FREDERIC ADYE

My name is Vanguard, my sire being Valiant, a name to conjure with in the Crackmore Vale, and my dear mother, Barbara, who came to our kennels from the Brocklesby. We were her first family, and four in number; my brother Vandal (a rare good hound he made), who hunted with us till in his third season he met with a terrible accident through that accursed barbed wire; Vaulter, my sister Victress, an ornament of our lady pack for five seasons, and myself. My earliest recollection is of a warm nest in a roomy out-house, where we had no end of fun and fights. Brushes and pads! how we used to set to and worry one another; except Vaulter, who was too lazy and good-tempered. Vandal and I were always at it, while Victress would join in (I can feel her sharp little teeth, like needles, in the scruff of my neck to this day) and towel first one of us and then the other, till mother, hearing the scrimmage, would come in with a warning growl and settle down among us, when we would drop each other like hot potatoes, and snuggle in for something better even than fighting. It was to our excellent mother's good doing that we largely owed our capital constitutions and sinewy frames. Vaulter, indeed, who was the greediest, and mother's favourite, did himself rather too well, and got drafted for over-size to the Devon and Somerset, which is where good hounds who grow too big usually go. I believe they have grand sport, too, over

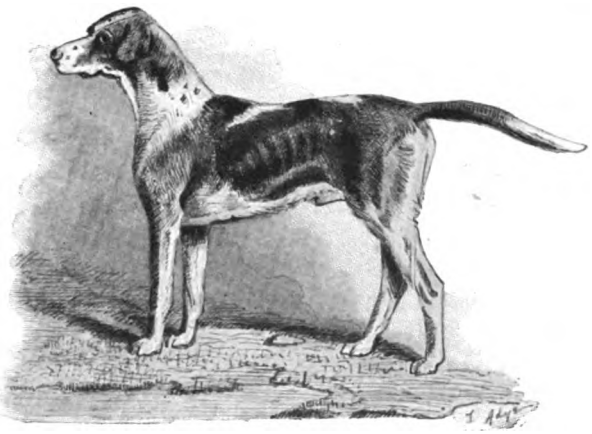
Exmoor and the Quantocks after the red deer, and fine times when they set one up to bay with his stern against a rock in some moorland stream; but give me fox and forty-five minutes with a good scent across the Crackmore Vale! Vaulter, too, poor fellow, came to a sad if glorious end; for he went over the cliffs at the throat of his deer, and was dashed to pieces on the rocks beside the Severn Sea.[1] As for Vandal and myself, we did not exceed twenty-four inches, which is our standard for the dog pack, or Victress twenty-three, which is that of hers. In colour we were all alike, black, a rich Belvoir tan, and white, Vandal being the darkest and Vaulter the lightest of the litter. 'A nice sorty lot,' as Jem Selby, our huntsman, said when he looked us over with the Master.

When we were about four months old we all went out to 'walk,' as is the custom in our hunt and most others. My first billet was with our sporting doctor, at Sherburton, a very good sort, but too much occupied with his patients to give me much attention beyond a 'Yoicks, Vanguard, good hound!' as he threw his leg over the neck of his reeking hack after a long morning's round. At this time I was a great shambling ungainly puppy, but with good bone, it was said, and capital feet. Terribly shy at first, and scared out of my skin almost if a stranger spoke to me, or a cat put up her back and glared at me out of the tail of her green slit of an eye as I passed; I gained confidence as time went on, and with Tess, a little wire-haired terrier, as sharp and saucy as they make 'em, and a young field spaniel named Dash, enjoyed myself immensely. We raided the doctor's larder almost daily, and occasionally made a foray on a butcher's shop in the town. Once I remember we stole a leg of mutton, on which occasion Dash nearly got his tail re-docked by a cleaver, while I made off with the joint, and had eaten nearly the whole of it under the railway arch when the mid-day express passed over it with a roar which sent me flying 'hell-for-leather'[2] till I reached the shelter of our stable yard. On another occasion, when the table was laid for luncheon, we nipped in through the open dining-room window, looted a succulent couple of cold ducklings, and had a rare feast in a flower bed on the

[1] Some few years ago a hunted stag crossed the lawn in front of Glenthorne, and leaping over the cliff was dashed to pieces on the rocks a hundred feet below, his fall being shared by two couple of leading hounds. The lamented Vaulter was doubtless one of them.—Ed.

[2] This strange expression, in common use with hunting folk, to denote headlong speed, is said to be phonetically derived from a German word equivalent to the French *ventre à terre*.

front lawn. I can see now that such exploits, enjoyable as they were at the time, must have been a shabby return for the hospitality extended to us; but, bless you, we were far too graceless ever to think of that. Still, we ought not to have ripped the stuffing out of the doctor's easy chair, into which he was wont to drop for a brief rest after a long round, or for forty winks after being up all night with a critical case or serious accident. The doctor, good man, knew that pups would be pups; but his wife, whom I never quite took to (though I did to her Sunday bonnet, which she hardly recognised when Dash and I had done worrying it), would have no more of us after the arm-chair incident; so Dash was tied up and I sent in disgrace back to the kennels, where I caught the distemper, which sadly sobered me for a



VANGUARD

while. I was quite an altered hound after this, a mere bag of bones, in fact, when convalescent and sent out to walk again, this time on a hill farm to recuperate. My new host, Joe Strange, a staunch supporter of the hunt and a thorough all-round sportsman, was a rare good sort, and under his kindly care, with lots of good skim milk (none of your separated stuff for me), stiff oatmeal porridge, and an occasional paunch when they killed a sheep, I was soon myself again, and able to enjoy a little gentle exercise after the poultry which swarmed in the rickyard and barton. That was what I liked on the farm; there was always something to chase. I tried the lambs when I got a bit stronger, but an interfering sheep dog chipped in and gave me such a hiding as completely spoiled that game. Balked of my sport with the lambs I fell back upon a brood of goslings, which looked

lovely when I'd laid 'em all out in a neat semicircle, and I felt quite proud of myself when Miss Millicent, Joe Strange's niece, who kept house for him, came up and looked at 'em too. She had a malacca cane hunting-crop in her hand, and—well, you wouldn't have believed a refined and nice-looking girl like that could have laid it on as she did. This wasn't the only time I caught it from her either. Lying on her bed one day for a comfortable siesta, and waking refreshed, my contemplative eye chanced to fall upon her best hat, which was reposing there too; when, remembering the fun I once had with the doctor's lady's Sunday bonnet, I began trifling with this, but—scissors! if she hadn't left an infernal great hat-pin in it (girls are so careless!) which went almost through my jaw. With an agonised yelp I sprang from that bed on to the toilet table, which overturned, smashing the looking-glass, and tore down the stairs yowling blue murder, while that unfeeling hussy laughed till the tears ran down her cheeks. However, we got to be great chums after a while, and when the time came for me to go back to the kennels, and I won the cup for the best dog puppy, I was right glad it should go to Joe Strange and his pretty niece for all their kindness during my walk at the hill farm.

Then began the serious business of life, and here I would pause to remark, how happy would be mankind could they combine pleasure with duty as we do! There was once a very wise human being[1] who observed that 'unting is all that's worth living for; all time is lost wot is not spent in 'unting.' This sentiment is one in which I cordially concur, and never shall I forget the rapture of my first run after a straight-necked fox! But first we had to learn our business among the cubs. Let out of kennel at five o'clock or earlier, according to the distance we had to go, we stretched and rolled in ecstasy on the sweet fresh turf around our huntsman's horse, with occasional yelps of delight in our liberty, and the prospect of sport in store. Then the long jog to some distant covert, where for hours, till the sun got too strong, we would rattle those dear fragrant little cubs, and feathering through brake and briar 'wake all the dewy woods,' as one of your human poets[2] says, 'with jangling music.' Of course we had lots to learn, and learning is painful at times, no less to puppies than to lads and lasses. Nestor, one of the old hounds who coached us (Jem always took out three couples of old hounds to two of the young entry, to put us in the way of it),

[1] Surely our old friend Jorrocks.—Ed.

[2] No less a one than Shelley.—Ed.

gave me some good advice, such as when to open and when to keep my mouth shut; to listen for the horn; to keep my nose down and work it out for myself; to ware riot and suchlike things; but of course no puppy, four-legged or two, is always wise enough to take the tips of his elders who know the ropes; we all have to learn by personal experience. My personal experience came one fair September morn, when in my youthful ardour I chevied a sweet-smelling bunny right under the nose of Ted's, the second whip's, horse. I heard him rating away, but paid no attention, being close on bunny's scut, when—great Scot!—something took me across the loins, and nearly cut me in two. It was Ted's con-

'WAKE ALL THE DEWY WOODS WITH JANGLING MUSIC'

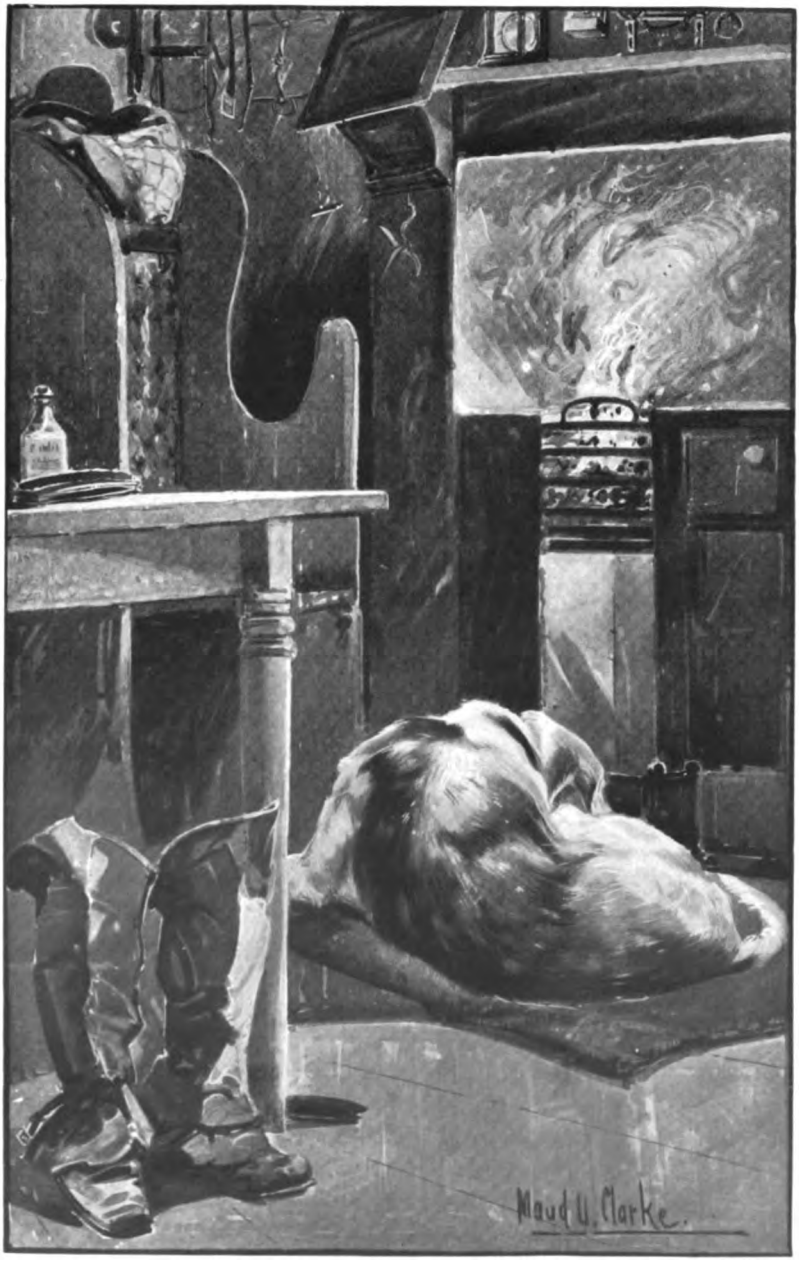
founded whip thong, as heavy and strong as a snake, and with about the same amount of sting in its thick silken lash. Many a youngster have I seen catch it since, with a grin of semi-contemptuous pity on what I once heard the Master call my 'expressive countenance.' However, I soon learned to keep out of Ted's way, and fly to Jem Selby's horn, who seldom rated, and never hit us, but made much of us in kennel with pats and caresses, and in the field, with his mellow voice, cheered us to the echo with 'Eleu in then, good hounds! Have at him, Ravager!' 'Hark to Melody!' and suchlike cries dear to the canine ear.

Then when November set in with its still sombre days and cloudy skies, and we took to real hunting, the fun began in earnest.

What times we had! As now I lie, warming my stiff old limbs in the cheering glow of the saddle-room fire, I dream it all again. What scenes rise up before my bleared and rheumy eyes! The background of dim dark woods, with the glint of scarlet showing bright against the boles of ash and sycamore; the pearly sky above, and great stretch of country beneath, where the vivid emerald at our feet deepens into the wondrous blue-green of the famous Crackmore Vale, and this again into the rich purple of the far distant hills. For life and movement the spruce well-mounted field, and the eager pack bright as stars, dashing, with the high-bred fox-hound's marvellous *élan*, into covert. Then hark! A challenge in yon belt of gorse, followed by sympathetic whimperings from hounds too conscientious to give tongue till they can own it for themselves. 'Twas but a babbling pup? No? Oh, joy—that first ravishing whiff in your own nostrils as you feather and draw towards the line which your comrades are making out, and you feel justified at last in adding your own voice to the joyful clamour. Then comes a halloa from the far end of the gorse where Tom Hardy, the first whip, is stationed to watch him break, and a loud twang of the horn where our huntsman picks his way through the covert. Confound those idiots beginning to gallop! One of 'em a lady? Well, I can't help that; she ought to know better; why won't they give us a chance? Someone addresses the offenders with wingèd words, and they hold hard just in time; while we, with a fine burst of music, like the bells of our Minster tower on a frosty Sunday morn, stream out of covert, and to Selby's ringing cheer race down the slope with a burning scent and the cream of the vale before us.

> Oh, merriest of all merry sounds,
> The diapason of the hounds.

Then the varied incidents of the chase: the brilliant gallop over the springy turf of what we call our flying country, which Hotspur, who hails from the Quorn, tells me resembles High Leicestershire, with the refreshing plunge through the Larksford brook and on again, each one striving his best to get to the head of affairs. Or again, the eager scramble over the great banks of Manston and Pulham, with frequent but not always unwelcome checks (for though this is some of our best scenting country, it is a stiff one to cross), and the quest in the cool moist spinneys on the banks of the sullen river. Then the supreme moment when we run him into view; and finally, after a last gallant struggle, with hackles up, and literally thirsting for blood, kill him in the open; while the wild who-whoop peals over the pastures of the vale, and



AS NOW I LIE, WARMING MY STIFF OLD LIMBS

is carried down the waves of the reedy Stour. Such moments are worth living for; the very memory of them sends a thrill through my aged frame.

Of many fine runs which during my active career I enjoyed, one stands out beyond all others. Indeed, it was the finest the hunt had achieved for many a long year, a real old-fashioned hunting run rivalling the most famous of the past. If I am not tiring my readers with my reminiscences I will give an account of it, for it is ever a delight to the veteran to recount the incidents of the record day of his life. We have our Waterloo as well as Leicestershire, and ours is known to this day as the Batcombe run.

We met then at Batcombe village, on the further side of our country, where it joins the Duke's, quite a long way from kennel. However, we drove up in the hound van with our unicorn team of greys, and Jem on the box beside the driver, as we usually do when we have a long distance to go, and are not short of work; and lucky we did so that day, or some of us would never have seen the end of it. It was just one of those still dull days in late November, not hot and oppressive as such days are very apt to be in these topsy-turvy seasons, but cool and quiet, with hardly any wind, just a faint breeze from the south-west, and the ground just right for going, neither too hard nor too deep. As we drove along through the narrow lanes of the Vale, Nestor remarked that it looked uncommon like a good scent; while another old hound, who was a regular grouser, said that if so, what a blamed shame it was we were going to Batcombe instead of Poyntington or Pulham, from either of which we should be sure of a good run! I didn't know the Batcombe country; though it was my third season I had never been there, but Ravager said it wasn't much good, while if we got into Cogley, with its cold scent and heavy clay ridings, we should probably be there all day. This did not trouble me much, for I enjoy woodland hunting as much as the fastest spin in the open. Not but what I enjoy a gallop when it comes, but the chief pleasure to a hound is the scent. The aroma of that sweet day clings to me still; I can shut my eyes and smell it now!

It was a largish meet when we got there. Besides a full field of our own members there were not a few strangers, men from the South Wilts, the Duke's, and other adjacent hunts, but not many carriages, and very few foot people, I was pleased to observe. Not that I begrudge them their share of the sport, which can't be much, poor things, but they do so get in the way. Hotspur tells me that at any great meet of the Quorn or Pytchley there are generally fifty or sixty girls on bicycles; I should show

my teeth at that any way. Well, we were in splendid condition, bright as stars, and were much admired. Jem had brought a mixed pack of twenty-two couples, and I had an opportunity of a few words with my sister Victress (a chance which did not often occur), and a lady friend of hers named Hero from the Heythrop, whom I rather admired. She was a lemon-pied hound of rare form and shape, with, I believe, a fair nose, though uncertain in temper, as her sex is apt to be. She was mated with Hotspur subsequently, which caused me some disappointment at the time; but my jealousy did not last long. Hotspur was a good hound and well deserved his good fortune, while I was fully satisfied with our own Violet, and other alliances contracted for me with ladies of various kennels.

We had not much time for converse on this occasion, for the Master drove up in his mail phaeton almost as soon as we were out of the van, and getting on his hunter at once gave the word for Batcombe Wood, within almost a stone's throw of the meet.

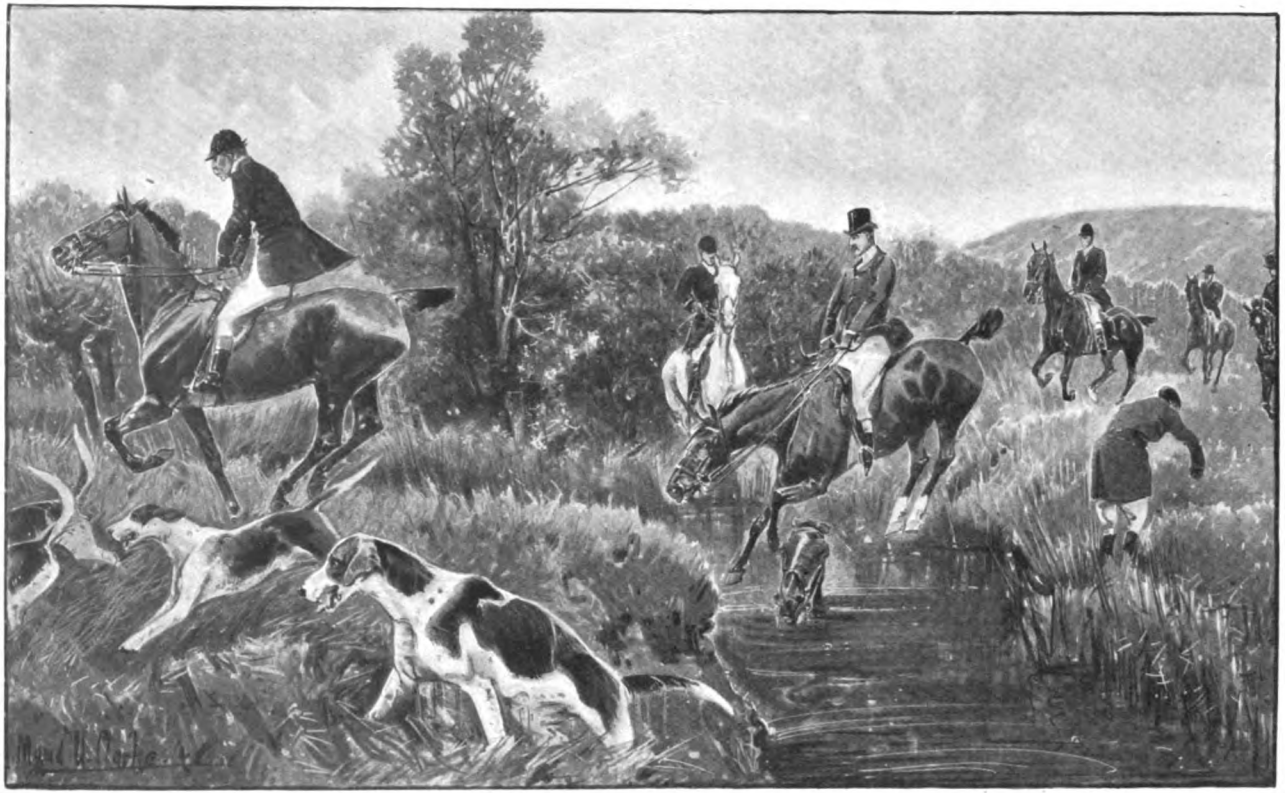
We were hardly in covert when there was a whimper, and Victress cantering by my side spoke to it at once. I for a moment could not, and made it a rule never to speak unless I knew (which is an excellent rule for other folk also as well as hounds), but in a few minutes there was no doubt about it, a fine rich scent seeming to pervade the whole wood. Nevertheless it was a good-sized one, and though we had him well on his legs from the first, it took us some time to get him out. At last, however, he broke covert and led us at a smart pace to Whistlebury, which he merely skirted, and soon Tom viewed him crossing Wanstrow Common, a fine dog fox loping quietly along without fuss or flurry, and pointing evidently for Witham. Nestor spotted him directly. It was, he said, the far-famed Friary fox, a notorious chicken stealer, and the terror of all the hen-wives for miles round; he had given two good runs in former seasons, besting on each occasion Jem Selby and his clever pack. 'We'll have him to-day anyhow,' exclaimed Vaunter, a second season hound, who thought a lot of himself; but old Nestor told him to shut his mouth and save his wind, for he'd want all he had before he ran into the Friary fox. And so it proved; a pretty dance he led us, from Witham to West End Wood, a nice covert of some four hundred acres; but finding the earths there well stopped he ran through it, and out on to Yarnfield Heath, where the wind being a little too much in his teeth he made for Kingswood and Alfred's Tower; then racing along the terrace at Stourton entered Brewham Wood well ahead of the pack. Here I made sure we had lost him, for puzzling

through the thick undergrowth I could make nothing of it at all, while Ringwood and Claribel, both reliable hounds, working on either side of me, were equally at fault. We were just about to throw up our heads in despair and wait for the horn, when a shrill halloa sounded far on our left front, and the next moment my brother Vandal, with two couple more, came flying to it, and dashed across us almost at right angles. It was just one of those moments when you must take it on trust or get left, so following their example I joined in, and bustling along we were just in time to respond to Jem's vigorous lift, and left the covert once more on fair terms with our fox.

Next he took us to New Park, and up the straight ride of Cock Road we galloped like greyhounds, scattering to right and left the burnished pheasants, which whirred from our path like rockets, and flew with startled screams through the silver-stemmed birches and glistening firs. Across the high road and through Stavordale Wood we drove him without check or stay, and thence into the depths of Penn Forest, where slow hunting ensued for the best part of an hour. This check must have afforded a welcome relief to the horses, some of which were already getting pretty well baked, and I was not sorry for the shade and a lap at a cool purling brooklet myself. Still we never lost touch of him, and hunting him relentlessly through tangled brake and forest glade we forced him again into the open, and drove him full cry across Leigh Common, on to Stoke Trister, and under Cucklington Hill. Here he was for the first time fairly in the Vale, and with a burning scent we hustled him along to Rodgrove, and away for the river Cale, the plunge through which was highly refreshing. I don't know if the field found it equally so, but several had an opportunity of trying—souse, souse—I heard behind me as I scrambled up the bank, and one horse I heard afterwards was so blown that he was nearly drowned. However, Jem was all right, which was all we cared for, and on his second horse he got alongside and cheered us as we ran gaily across Horsington Marshes. 'Told you we were in for a good thing,' said Nestor, who, game old hound! was going with the best of us, and the better the further he went. And we were, sure enough. Through the farmsteads and orchards of Horsington we had some fine hunting, the wily old fox doing all he knew to best us. Once he leaped a low wall and doubled back behind us, by which manœuvre he got five minutes' rest, which he must have sorely needed, in a disused pig-sty. But it was no use, we had him out in a trice, and, working him through several hamlets and villages, forced him again into the open

country. Here he went so straight and strong for a while that I feared he would beat us after all; the thought made me mad, and I strained every nerve to come up with him. With Ringwood and Hotspur I had been for some time at the head of affairs, and we pressed him now all we could. At last I viewed him, running with his tongue out and trailing brush, and saw him squeeze through a gate and creep up the inside of a hedge. Here was my chance; running a bit wide of the others I scrambled up the bank and jumped almost on top of him among some swedes. Unable to go a yard further the fox, displaying all his gleaming teeth in a last snarl of defiance, turned upon me. Though nearly done, the sight of him seemed to endue me with fresh strength and vigour; I felt my hackles rise and a thrill of fierce joy went through my stiffened limbs like a flood of fire. I saw red as I closed, and his strong jaws met with a snap which took a piece clean out of my cheek. That moment I was joined by Ringwood and Hotspur. There was a short fierce worry, and then I lay panting on the ground in an ecstacy of content, while Jem's shrill who-whoop rang the knell of the Friary fox. A better never stood before hounds, or led a more gallant chase. Three hours and forty-two minutes was said to be the time of this run, which covered at least twenty-five miles of varied country.

Well, it isn't all like this, of course. There are long blank days among the great shooting coverts where, with some honourable exceptions, foxes are apt to be reduced to the vanishing point; and there are other days when, though there may be plenty of foxes, we can't run them a yard; when scent is so bad, we can't make it out for a furlong over grass or fallow, upland or vale; or else they get to ground, and we are whipped off, while the terriers have all the fun. Sometimes, too, a long spell of frost intervenes and confines us to kennels, a thing I abominate. Blessed are bench and feeding-trough when, hungry as wolves, footsore and weary, we come in after a long jog homeward in the dusk of the short winter's day, after being on our legs perhaps since nine o'clock in the morning; but too much kennel saps the spirit of any hound with a soul above horse-flesh and meal. As for sheer hard work, or cold or wet, or rain or fog, or anything save frost, which cuts our feet so that we cannot hunt, we don't mind them at all. Then there are the hard-riding fools, who have mercy neither on horse nor hound, and know nothing of either these have little idea of how they distract and annoy us in our work, nor would they perhaps care if they could be convinced of it, though being, as one imagines them, thoroughly selfish persons, they might possibly exercise more self-restraint



SOUSE, SOUSE, I HEARD BEHIND ME AS I SCRAMBLED UP THE BANK

could they be made to realise how much good sport they deprive themselves of by pressing on and interfering with us when engaged in the most delicate and arduous of operations, that of puzzling out and authenticating a scent which is cold or badly foiled; but worst of all is that cruel barbed wire which cut my poor brother Vandal, best and bravest of hounds, all to ribbons. My teeth are not what they were, but would I could feel what are left of them meet in the calf of the miscreant who invented it! But there, if I once get on that line—let me cast back.

Well, every dog has his day, and the foxhound's is but a short one. Still, it is worth having, and I am glad to have had mine. 'What a pity it is,' as good old Jorrocks observed, 'that we can't put new legs on old noses!' The young hounds think they know everything, but it strikes me that we in our day could have shown them a wrinkle or two. One thing I certainly believe is that hounds look now to have everything done for them, and directly they get into any difficulty, instead of trying to make it out for themselves, in too many packs they throw up their heads and look to their huntsman for assistance. Jem Selby always taught us to rely on ourselves and the noses Providence had blessed us with, and only to look to him when we had done our best and failed.

On the morality or utility of our calling in life, a question which, I understand, exercises a great many good people, I have nothing to say. We are bred for a special purpose, and we fulfil that purpose to the utmost of our powers: what human can do more? At least, we may claim that we contribute largely to the health, happiness, and manly character of a considerable number of beings superior in the scale of creation to ourselves. I regret that from things I have seen and heard I cannot respect every member of that superior race as I should like to do; but for all those with whom I have come into personal contact and relation I have the highest regard, especially for our noble master and Joe Strange on the hill; I owe also many thanks to the kennelmen and hunt servants generally for unvarying kindness and attention, while for Jem Selby (without a single exception the best and greatest being on earth) I shall feel to my last hour that devoted and passionate affection which is the distinguishing trait of our race; the best hope left to me in my declining days, when all active participation in the pleasures of the chase is past, being that I may some day hear his mellow cheer and the cry of my old comrades on the happy hunting plains, where will be no wire, plenty of foxes, and always a good scent.

AN OLD GLADSTONE BAG

BY CYRIL E. BROWNE

It is a very old bag, worn and buffeted and patched—for years my faithful travelling companion on every sporting expedition. The torn, dingy labels cling on in every stage of lingering decay. Some of them, ancient, dirty, fragmentary, are scarce decipherable. Others, to wit that which guided us to last Saturday's football, are in the vigour of immaculate youth.

What reminiscences these scraps of paper call up! What a crowd of pleasant recollections surge upon me as I survey my dear old dirty bag—memories of fish and fowl, of bog and mountain, covert and stream. It has its own good comrades too, and loves to travel with those two old friends, the rod-case and the old, brown-leather gun-case. A disreputable trio, perhaps; yet respectable from very length of meritorious service. The Gladstone bag has the largest record of the three, and can boast voyages that neither gun nor rods ever undertook. When I went to the Fens in the big frost, it was he who carried my skates, when I went sea-fishing on the South Coast, it was he who carried my tackle. Together we braved the terrors of the North Sea and the discomforts of a continental railway system, what time we fore-gathered with a team of other bags and their owners, and journeyed to the sun-baked football fields of Germany. But that was years ago—still the tiniest remnant of a gaudy hotel label survives to remind us of the kindly welcome accorded us by the hospitable athletes of the Fatherland.

We have gone through our share of the vicissitudes of travel, my

bag and I. Once we parted company for many months; he travelled through the length of the land in search of me, explored half the lost property offices in the kingdom, and finally reached my home, battered, travel-stained and wearied of goods trains and luggage vans, but faithfully carrying within his clasp all the property I had entrusted to his keeping. Once, with his master, he was nearly lost while crossing a half-mile strait in a small row-boat in three parts of a gale. More than once we have both been rudely precipitated into the ditch or on the hard road by the overturning of car or dog-cart. Only last January we narrowly escaped a watery end in the foaming, gale-swept waters of Conway Bay, what time the sea demolished the embankment and overwhelmed a goods train that preceded us.

One old label, almost obliterated, has just enough to show that once it read 'Falmouth.' We were three Cantabs in search of a quiet healthy spot wherein to spend a month of the Long, with a little 'reading' and a good deal of open air. To satisfy our consciences, we read for a steady two hours after early bathe and breakfast each morning. To this rule we adhered strictly—save when some big regatta demanded our early attendance. The first two nights we spent in curious, old fashioned, salt-savoured Falmouth, while searching in a 10-ton cutter for a suitable haven of rest. Eventually, after exploring numbers of delightful spots, we anchored at a charming, breezy village, no more than three or four miles by water from the inner harbour, and some ninety miles by land! A cottage furnished us with capital quarters, and we chartered a fishing boat—a small open yawl—for the modest sum of twenty-eight shillings a week, owner included. We were ignorant enough of matters nautical and had a dozen adventures before we could handle our boat aright. There was half a gale blowing one day when I tumbled head over heels backwards onto the lee gunwale, collecting half the British Channel down my back, all but capsizing the little boat, and swamping her up to the thwarts. One morning two of us sailed out to see the 'Britannia,' which was being towed into harbour for the morrow's races. Something went wrong with the helm and we ran full tilt for the champion cutter's side and only just averted a disaster—to the mingled scorn and amusement of her crew. Another time, in the inner harbour, the tiller broke off short, and we ran amok among a crowd of small boats, our sails (which had somehow broken loose!) flapping wildly in the breeze. However, we were soon fairly competent to manage the 'Minnie' by ourselves, but we seldom went out without 'old

Robert'—the good-natured, grizzled old fisherman who owned the little craft. For the coast is dangerous, and, moreover, our fishing would surely not have prospered as it did without his guidance. What suppers we used to have, with those fresh mackerel split and broiled 'off the water,' or 'marinated' after the good house-wife's pet recipe, and always a huge jar of Cornish cream to eat with her homely but delicious puddings!

The old man was a great addition to our company. He was always ready to reel off a yarn about his adventures on the coast, and these were many and 'parlous,' to use a phrase of his own. His stories were invariably prefaced with 'Which o' you gents has got most 'bacca?' and his black clay pipe was long divorced from its stem. It was a jolly life; all day and every day on the water, exploring the magnificent, rugged, reef-strown coast, hunting out quaint, old-world fishing hamlets, visiting the drift-nets, fishing for mackerel or pollack, improvising sailing or swimming matches, or watching the hundred and one little local regattas. In the evenings we would sit chatting over our pipes with kindly, weather-beaten fisher-folk, or gruff, good-natured coast-guards, and watching with a curious fascination the ever-recurring beams of the lighthouse over the water.

The regattas were an unfailing amusement. In the 'New Royal Mail steamer "Princess May,"' a strong little tub that daily conveyed a small post-bag across from Falmouth, we visited Penzance. It is a glorious coast-line, though wild and treacherous. Past the ugly teeth of the Manacles, whose bell-buoy tolls wearily in the swell; past the bold Black Head, whose summit is a paradise of wild flowers, we round up the wonderful serpentine rocks of the Lizard, with its twin lights and the picturesque little Kynance Cove, and at length enter the great sweep of Mount's Bay. The Mount itself calls forth the inevitable comparisons with its Bretagne counterpart. We would like to visit it and to

> Climb St. Michael,
> His Mount—you'll all go there
> Of course, and those who like'll
> Sit in St. Michael's chair,

but time forbids, for soon after passing Market Jew the last gun fires, and 'Britannia,' 'Vigilant,' and 'Satanita' glide swiftly past the committee steamer. The graceful beauty of these great silken-sailed cutters is very fascinating as they skim the waves, with their white wings spread to the breeze. It was worth a visit from London alone to see the 'Duke of Cornwall's' yacht rounding a mark boat at a small angle, and shooting out her

great bellying spinnaker in fewer seconds than it takes to write of it. The enthusiasm of the natives when the Duke's boat won the big race was only excelled by the shouts of an Epsom crowd when the same royal sportsman led his horse in a Derby winner.

As a spectacle at sea I have never seen anything surpass the Royal Cornwall Regatta in Falmouth Bay. Many thousands of spectators lined the shores of Pendennis, and the slopes of St. Anthony-in-Roseland; the weather was brilliant, and heavy clouds scudded fast across the clear blue sky before a rattling breeze. The water for miles was dotted with shipping of every description. It was the largest and finest concourse of vessels that I have ever seen. First of all, it chanced that there was an unusual number of merchantmen of all nations in port—ships, barques, brigs, barquentines, schooners, and steamers, all gay with bunting in honour of the day—we had counted some seventy or eighty the evening before. There was the host of vessels, large and small, attracted by the racing—beautiful steam yachts, pleasure steamers, cruising yachts of every shape and description, schooners, cutters, yawls, and ketches, besides a huge throng of fishing-smacks and small boats, and not a few 'dip-lugs' from the pilchard fleet. There, of course, were hundreds of shapely racing craft, from the big boats and 40-raters, such as 'Corsair' and 'Carina,' down to the absurd little ½-rater skimming-dishes that spent their time with mast and sails almost horizontal.

This congregation was almost big enough, one would have thought. But in the middle of the afternoon a number of smoky dots were seen on the horizon, which grew bigger and bigger, until into the heart of the throng majestically steamed the Red Squadron, of some fifty sail, under orders for the manœuvres, headed by dignity, H.M.S. 'Royal Sovereign,' and brought up by impudence, the tiny, throbbing, little torpedo-craft. I shall never forget the gorgeous scene that evening as we stood on the Castle Hill of St. Mawes and looked over the myriad lights and illuminations, and watched the weird play of the search-lights from the men-of-war as they threw the brilliance of daylight in dancing wedges on the shipping in the midst of the dark waters.

Another luggage label on my old valise, not quite so grimy or fragmentary, deals, like the last, with watery pastimes, but this time the water is fresh, and teems with salmon and trout. 'Galway,' city of the tribes, full of old sculptured memories of the tribesmen, picturesque, antique, dirty, hospitable, fishy old

town, capital of the finest and kindliest county in the kingdom, the very home of sport in all its branches.

This label was affixed not so long ago by my civil old porter at Euston, and by its virtue my faithful bag, with its precious cargo of flybook, reels, and lines landed some twenty hours later on the platform in the far West. What a flood of pleasant memories that 'Galway' label brings over me—memories of fish and fowl, fin and feather, beautiful scenery and generous friends! The first day in Galway city must assuredly bring with it a peep over the bridge into the famous fishery. The salmon are lying there so thick that the river bed seems paved with their steel-dark backs. If they are waiting like that at all the other estuaries along the coast, what a lively time the old greenheart will have, if only there comes some rain and a flood! They lie thick as herrings in a barrel. Herrings, quotha! There is no lack of them here. One day when I was in the town the Claddagh boats had struck a wondrous haul. I have never seen such prodigious numbers of fish together. The whole town was littered with herrings. The narrow alleys lay ankle-deep in fish, and every door was blocked by the tubs of old wives busy salting down. Every other man or woman was laden with some portion of the harvest. Every minute brought in fresh boat-loads, which were sold *en masse* as they lay at the quay-side. There must have been millions of fish.

The natural scenery of the county can hardly be over-rated. In the west, the Connemara district, rise up great rugged mountain ranges, vast heather-clad moors, and innumerable lakes and streams, all filled with trout or salmon. To fly-fishers it is a paradise, and before I left, my old Gladstone bag was plastered over with labels, pasted on by the expansive tongues of thick-brogued porters on little grey stone Irish railway stations. 'Recess,' where I caught great Connemara white trout. 'Westport,' whence I enjoyed two days' grouse shooting in the Barony of Murrisk. 'Newport,' near a lake which gave me grand days with the grilse. 'Tuam,' in the heart of the stone-wall country, where I had two days' unequalled sport on a little bay mare. It was with sincere regret that I yielded to duty's metropolitan call, packed up rod and gun and gave directions for a 'Euston' label to be affixed to the battered leather of my sporting old valise. It is good for many another trip. It has stoutly stood the racket of years of railroad and packet-boat. And though its surface be worn and its old straps have given place to new, its dusky, travel-soiled sides will bear many another luggage label to tell tales of adventure and of sport.

A DISH OF ASPARAGUS

BY WILLIAM PIGOTT

In a small meadow, at the edge of a market town, a company of Volunteers was drilling. In the surrounding green the red of their coats was sharp and brilliant; little bits of steel about them sparkled in the evening light, as they ordered and formed. There was something soothing in the scene; the still air, the crisp, clear voice of the Adjutant, the moving files.

Presently came the order to dismiss. The ranks broke, and the men straggled by twos and threes into the town, ready and pleased to be cynosures. The Sergeant, holding himself with great pomposity by virtue of his connexion with the Regular forces, for some moments remained behind and spoke a few words to his officer. Then he too departed, and the Adjutant was left to his reflections.

His name was Major McCormick, and his age—to judge from appearances—nearer forty than thirty. His hair and moustache were tinged with grey, but in his face there were few wrinkles and in his carriage no lack of spirit. When the Sergeant had left him, he walked slowly as far as the gate of the meadow, and there remained for a while, looking over.

He was not pleased with this office, to which he had lately been deputed. It was too slow, too uneventful. It involved separation from his companions and the passing of nights in small towns offering no attractions. Having set the Volunteers through their paces, he was regularly met with a difficulty in disposing of the remainder of the evening. Of the particular town indeed, wherein he had just completed his inspection, he had had no previous experience; but he was prepared to be agreeably surprised, should he find it in any way differing from the others to which it had been necessary for him to go.

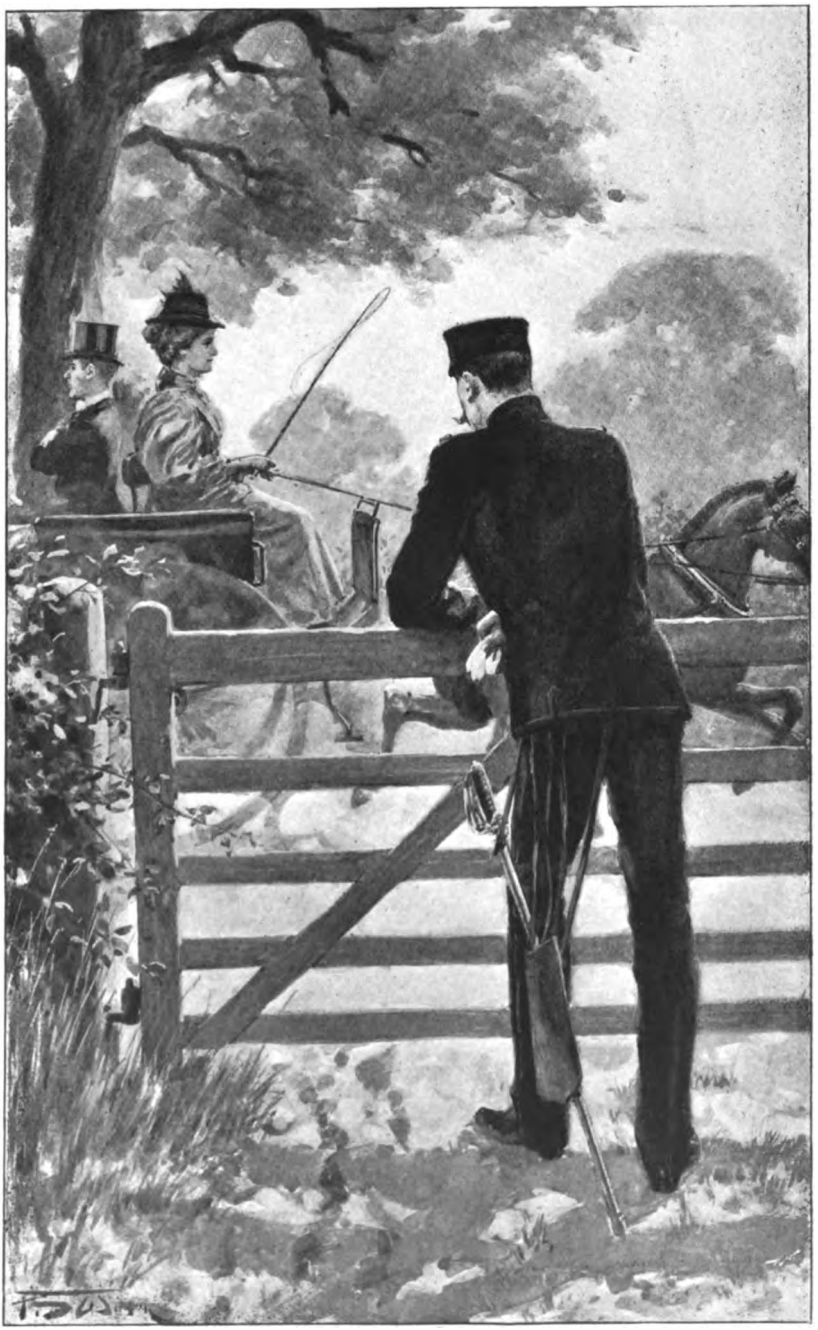
The gate upon which he leant opened out on the white high-road. It was June, and the dust rose disagreeably, powdering the hedges. A waggon lumbered by, and left the marks of its passage upon his uniform. Presently, down the road to the left, a new cloud appeared. It was accompanied by pattering hoofs, and followed in the wake of a small pony-trap driven by a woman. The little animal came industriously along from the direction of the houses, and was approaching at a rate quite disproportionate to the sultry evening. As it drew near, he perceived that the modest equipage was daintily caparisoned. The pony's coat was sleek and glossy, the varnish was new, the furniture and trappings were unexceptionable. Its only occupant, besides the driver, was a liveried groom upon the back seat, with arms carefully folded.

But the soldier's attention became gradually absorbed by the lady who was driving. He watched her, at length, so eagerly that she must surely have resented it had she been less intent on managing the course of her steed. She was neither young nor middle-aged, but something between, and sufficiently beautiful to have attracted admiration even in a throng. By her present occupation that beauty was enhanced, for it gave a flush to her features that well became her. Unconscious of the regard she was receiving, she rattled by the gate where the Adjutant stood. He looked after her through the dust, in a manner barely to be accounted the outcome of admiration alone.

When the last sign of the small equipage had disappeared, the Major drew a deep breath and left his post. He entered the inn where his belongings were housed, and quickly emerged again. He was still in the undress uniform, but rid of his sword. At once—though probably with no fixed intention—he proceeded along the high-road, in the wake of the pony-trap. He walked hurriedly and was obviously preoccupied.

Nearing the end of the second mile, he came to a stone bridge spanning a stream. There he rested. For the first time, it is possible, he reviewed his motives. Certainly, when he rose from the parapet of the bridge, his mind had changed, for he crossed a stile that was fixed at its side and walked slowly by the margin of the river.

This new direction was surely to be preferred. A cooling scent rose from the water; the trees were so prodigal of shade that only here and there could the slanting sun-rays find an opening; unseen insects hummed drowsily. In a while the Adjutant sat himself down and watched the flies circling and



UNCONSCIOUS OF THE REGARD SHE WAS RECEIVING, SHE RATTLED BY THE GATE WHERE THE ADJUTANT STOOD

dipping at the surface of the stream. His reflections at first were gloomy; but presently they took a turn, and he broke into laughter, sharp and sudden.

He was thinking of an event which had marked his life some fifteen years before. Lately, indeed—across the bridge of years—it had become less of an event and more of an episode. Nevertheless, he was thinking of it now. In those days he had

HE CAME TO A STONE BRIDGE SPANNING A STREAM

fancied himself in love with a pretty face, and had married it. He had been cured of the calf-love long before the ceremony, and would gladly have been rid of his bargain, but no opportunity of escape was offered him, and honour kept him to his word. Reasonably such a union could not produce happiness, nor did it. At the end of three months they had tired of the new existence, had quarrelled fiercely, and had separated. Through his solicitor, McCormick had offered an allowance. It was refused, and there-

after he had never seen his wife, nor anyone like her, till the lady had passed him in the pony-trap. In her there was assuredly a likeness, yet a meagre one. His wife—as he remembered her—was a girl of eighteen, slight, unformed, pretty enough at times, but, on the whole, too pale, too vapid. Could this beautiful woman be the same? He hoped that it might be with an eagerness that surprised himself.

Little enough in all this, one would think, to cause merriment. The Adjutant, when he laughed, had gone back to the immediate cause of their last quarrel. That was trivial enough—a dish of asparagus. He had proposed to eat it with his fingers. She had expressed surprise and suggested a fork. He had declined to be advised, on the ground of convenience. Thereupon a discussion on manners ensued, not sufficiently general. She remarked that her family had always deprecated the use of fingers at table, as a sign of ill-breeding. He replied that he didn't care a fig for her family, and the matter was thereby fairly set a-going. So can a mine be exploded with a very small fuse.

Thus far had the Major proceeded in his retrospect when he became interested in a boy who was fishing a little way up the stream. Apparently he was not enjoying the best of luck, for he had left the rod to take care of itself and was stretched on his back, with his head on his hands and his knees in the air. In such circumstances a particularly large fish concluded to bite, and the rod was jerked into the stream. It floated down towards McCormick, and by the aid of a switch from a tree he managed—not too easily—to drag it ashore.

The boy was abundantly grateful. 'I'll tell you what,' he declared: 'I should have lost that rod if you hadn't been there.'

'I hope not,' said the Major.

'Well, I'm awfully obliged to you—I am, really. You didn't get wet, did you?'

'Nothing to speak of.'

'That's the worst of fishing: there's always the danger of losing your rod.'

'You call it fishing?' said the soldier drily, and sat down on the stump of a tree.

The boy, presumably feeling that something was due from him, squatted on the grass by his benefactor's feet. 'You don't belong to—anywhere round here?' he asked.

'No.'

'I thought not. Come to think of it, it's a jolly rum thing how you happen to be here.'

The Adjutant was not disposed to be communicative. 'No doubt it seems so,' he replied.

'You look to me something like a soldier. Are you a soldier?'

'You have found me out.'

'I wasn't sure, because of the colour. I don't think I ever saw a soldier in black before.'

'Didn't you? Well, you had better make the most of the opportunity.'

'I suppose,' said the boy, 'after a while they'll give you a red rig-out?'

He received an unexpected reply. His companion burst into laughter. Thereat the boy understood that something was amiss with his argument and did not pursue it.

'At one time,' he remarked, presently, 'I used to think of going in for soldiering myself; but my mother didn't like the idea, so I gave it up.'

'That was a pity,' said the Adjutant.

'You see,' added the boy, 'my father was a soldier, and that went against it.'

'I should have thought it would have done the reverse.'

'You don't understand. Of course, you couldn't be supposed to. My father was rather a bad man.'

'Oh!'

'Yes, he left my mother, and all that.'

Up to this point the Major had listened indolently to the boy's chatter. At the last announcement he became suddenly alert. 'Left her!' he exclaimed. 'When was that?'

'Oh, no end of a time ago! I never saw him, so I can't say exactly; but I call it a jolly mean kind of trick. I think my mother ought to be pleased he's gone; but sometimes I find her crying—quietly, you know, and all by herself. Of course, I don't say anything, but I feel pretty sure it's about my father.'

There was a brief pause. Then McCormick laid his hand upon the boy's shoulder. 'I want you to tell me your name,' he said, kindly.

The lad looked sharply into the face of his interrogator, surprised at the change of tone. He hesitated, but only momentarily. 'Charles McCormick,' he answered.

The Major was thereby apprised, somewhat abruptly, that he had a son, and that he was talking with him. He was gratified by the information, chiefly because it removed his doubt as to the identity of the lady in the pony-trap. While sitting on the bridge he had determined to hold out the olive-branch,

should she prove to be his wife. Satisfied on that score, he was now exercised as to the mode of presenting himself and as to the reception he was likely to receive.

By way of preliminary he examined his son's appearance. It was an interesting study, but the young gentleman found it embarrassing, and gathered up his tackle as a sign that he proposed to depart. The soldier concluded to go with him. 'It is in my way,' he explained.

'Oh, then you are going to Ashton?'

'I WANT YOU TO TELL ME YOUR NAME'

Ashton was not even a name to the Major, but he found himself cornered. 'Yes,' he replied.

'What on earth are you going to Ashton for? It is only a village.'

The Adjutant fumed inwardly. He was beginning to feel that this conversation was not likely to stand to his advantage in any remarks he might subsequently be called upon to address to his son on the subject of his moral behaviour. 'Business,' he said, testily.

'Oh, really!' The boy appeared to be genuinely interested. Further, he was bent on improving his mind. 'I often wonder

what kind of business soldiers have—I mean, of course, when they're not fighting. What kind of business is it?'

The officer proceeded to explanations. They were not sufficiently detailed to satisfy the boy, and more elaborate ones followed. In these he picked sundry holes, which required to be separately patched up. Thus, by the time they reached the house, the Major had decided that there were certain disadvantages attaching to parentage.

From the gate he could see a lady watering a flower-bed, and he recognised the driver of the pony-trap. He drew into the shadow of the hedge. His pulses were beating quickly.

'A little while ago,' he reminded his son, 'I fished your rod from the water.'

'Yes,' said the boy.

'Will you do me a service in return?'

'Rather—anything in the world.'

McCormick took off his signet-ring. 'Then take this ring to your mother, and tell her that the man it belongs to thinks asparagus should be eaten with a fork.'

The young gentleman's declaration was proved to be of little value. 'Oh, I can't say that,' he protested; 'it's too silly.'

'Well, what will you do it for? Will you do it for half-a-crown?'

'Tell me the rot again,' said the boy, cautiously.

'You are to take this ring to your mother, and say that its owner thinks asparagus should be eaten with a fork. You can add, if you remember, that in future he intends to make a practice of it.'

'That last part wasn't in when you offered half-a-crown.'

'Very well, we'll strike it out.' The Major was managing his side of the contract with sadly little commercial ability.

The boy turned the offer over in his mind. He was evidently not prepared to barter his dignity too cheaply. Perhaps he saw that he was in a position to state his own terms. 'If you'll make it five bob,' he said at length, 'I'll do it.'

'A bargain,' said the soldier, and the consideration was handed over thereupon, with commendable promptitude.

The boy, upon his part, proceeded along the path towards the house—not too quickly, as it seemed to the soldier, who watched through the foliage. He saw him speak to the lady who was watering the flower-beds, then give her the ring. She looked at it; changed colour; glanced momentarily, almost in alarm, in the direction of the gate; and once more examined the ring. The

boy, to judge from visual evidences, proceeded to an explanation, and she asked him questions, which he answered with frequent gestures towards the lane where the Adjutant was standing. Finally he saw the lady enter the house, and the boy returned slowly to the gate.

He was obviously puzzled. 'You are to go in,' he said to McCormick; 'but not too soon. I say, is that rot a cipher or something?'

He received no reply. The Major took upon himself to disregard the latter portion of the message, and at once made his way into the house. There he remained, according to the boy's way of thinking, endlessly long. When at last he emerged, the lady was with him, and they seemed to be on excellent terms.

'Charlie,' said she, 'this is your father. You must love him.'

'I don't think he will,' said the Major. 'He knows me too well. He knows I am rather a bad man.'

'DAMES CHASSERESSES'

BY ISABEL ANSTRUTHER THOMSON

IN the 'Histoire de la Chasse en France,' by M. Dunoyer de Noirmont, there is an interesting account of the historical sportswomen of that country from the fifteenth century down to the Revolution, a short sketch of which may be amusing to readers of the BADMINTON.

We find that there were 'Ladies in the Field' (*Dames Chasseresses* they are called by M. de Noirmont) under the *ancien régime*, who rode as straight to hounds and with hearts as bold as any of our latter-day sportswomen. We are told that side-saddles were not invented until modern times, and we marvel to hear that these brave devotees of sport sat astride on their horses clothed in a *devantière*, or divided garment—although, the alternative being an armchair and footboard, we know that no sportswoman would have hesitated for a moment between these two positions on horseback.

Catherine de Medicis, described as an indefatigable and fearless rider, was the first to sit sideways on her horse, 'that is, with her knee on the saddle-bow,' says Brantôme (in his 'Vie des Dames Illustres, françaises et étrangères'), 'which position is much more graceful and becoming to her,' the old chronicler remarks, 'than that of the armchair.' And in this precarious attitude the Queen was to be seen urging her timid son Francis to dash through the tangled coppices of Chambord and Fontainebleau. We are told that she had many falls, breaking her leg on one occasion, on another her head, which had to be trepanned; and our inward reflection is that were our seat in the saddle of an equally hazardous nature, the heroines of the hunting-field would not be as numerous as they are to-day!

Catherine continued her perilous sport till over sixty years

old, and always accompanied the King out hunting, *taking with her all her children*, which must have added considerably to the anxieties of the day. Few ladies can boast of so long a record in the hunting-field!

Catherine was also fond of shooting with the crossbow, and was a good shot. She always carried her bow when out walking to aim at any object that attracted her attention.[1]

Besides the want of proper saddles for hunting, we must remember that the *dames chasseresses* were not mounted on the kind of horses to which latter-day sportsmen are happily accustomed. Thoroughbred horses were not seen in England till the Arab strain was introduced in the time of James I., and the horses procured from England before that period appear to have been of a very nondescript character. Lord Hastings, writing to Louis XI. in 1480 as Minister of the King of England, says: 'Sire, I have made bold by the advice of M. d'Elne (bishop of Elne and Ambassador of France) to send you by the bearer of this letter some greyhounds, a *hobin* (Irish pony), and a hackney, who go pretty smoothly.'

The ladies of the fifteenth century were all mounted on these *hobins*, which may, we think, be the origin of our modern word hobby-horse!

In February 1482 Marie of Burgundy, the wife of Maximilian Archduke of Austria, met with an accident out hawking, caused by the breaking of her saddle-girths while her *hobin* was jumping a fallen tree. The poor lady was, like all her family, devoted to sport. The Dukes of Burgundy possessed famous packs of grey, probably badger-pied, hounds in the fifteenth century. This race of greyhounds were supposed to have been brought from the East by Saint-Louis and were always used by the Royal Hunt.

À propos of hounds, an amusing anecdote is told of Louis XI. which rather quaintly introduces his famous daughter Anne of Bourbon, Madame de Beaujeu:

'There was in the fifteenth century a race of white hounds of the St. Hubert breed, less highly thought of by sportsmen than the black ones because they would only hunt stag. It happened one day that a poor gentleman took into his head to offer one of these hounds, by name *Souillard*, to the King, who paid it little attention, having no regard for any but grey hounds. Gaston du Lyon, seneschal of Toulouse, who was with the King at the time, asked for this hound, wishing to present it to "the wisest lady in

[1] This bow was preserved in the Museum of the Kings of France. See 'Dames Illustres.'

his kingdom," Madame de Beaujeu. "I must correct you for calling her the wisest," said the King; "say rather less foolish than the others; as for wise women, there are none."'

The very low opinion His Majesty expresses of the wisdom of womankind did not prevent his making the daughter in question, at no very distant period, Regent of France during the minority of her brother Charles VIII., which leads us to the conclusion that although wise women were not to be found in France at that period, the men must at all events have been considered infinitely more foolish. In fact, the revolt raised against her by the nobles has been called the *guerre folle*; they experienced nothing but defeat. Madame Beaujeu was twenty-three years of age when she became Regent of France.

In the hunting book of Jacques de Brézé, Grand Seneschal of France, a poem is dedicated to this lady's prowess in the chase, which is, as Mr. Jorrocks says, 'the sport of kings, the image of war without its guilt, and only twenty per cent. of its danger!'

In this poem we are shown Madame attentively listening to the report of the harbourer, for the sport is stag-hunting, and giving her orders for the placing of the relays of hounds, while she carefully examines the traces of the deer before rousing him from his lair. Again we see her in the first flight, cheering on the hounds: 'Baldur, my beauty, yonder he goes!' In the check that follows, with her own eye she detects that he is running his foil; and when at last he is pulled down by the hounds Madame dismounts and secures the head, calls each hound by name, and gives to each his portion of the feast.

The historian Brantôme complains that many ladies of his day preferred music, dancing, and the chase *à tous les propos d'amour*. 'I knew,' says he, 'a brave and gallant noble who became so deeply in love with a lady, that he died of it; for said he when I wish to speak of my feelings she will only talk of her hounds and her hunting, so that I wish with all my heart I might be metamorphosed into some fine hound or beagle, according to Pythagoras, and my soul be cured of its wounds.'

Madame de Guette, described as 'la vaillante amazone,' was an ardent follower of the hunt at Grosbois. 'M. le duc d'Angoulême,' she writes, 'was pursuing the stag, and the ladies had all the sport; I was not out of it for a moment, because this was one of my ruling passions. On the return it was a great amusement to see the *curée* performed, and to hear them winding numerous horns to cheer the hounds, who made a great singing in the kennels.'

During the Carnival of 1645 Madame de la Guette and her sister amused themselves by galloping in the park at Grosbois *all booted* and dressed like men.

In the account book of Queen Isabel of Bavaria there is entered, among other items, 'Three yards of cloth to make three divided garments for the Queen.' This shows the riding habits of that time to have been an economical contrivance as compared with those that came after, when the hunting costume appears to have become a most elaborate and expensive affair. The ladies of the Court of Louis XIV. wore elegant *capotes* covered with plumes, which were found to be so becoming that they were donned again at night to go to the ball! At one of the hunting expeditions in the forest of Sainte-Geneviève the wind blew away the plumed hat of Madame de Fontanges, and the beautiful maid of honour replaced her headgear by a knot of ribbons, with so charming a result that ribbons worn in this same way became the fashion, and this fashion was called after her.

Dangeau says: 'In January 1699 the King was out stag-hunting with the Duchess of Burgundy[1] in a *calèche*. She was in hunting costume, wearing a little frock coat, and she looked very well in it. It was the first time she had worn a hunting-coat.'

'In December 1700 it was said that the young Duchess was to ride for the first time out hare-hunting. By the spring of 1701 she was hunting the stag, to the great joy of her grandfather.'

The ladies of the Court of Louis XIV. were expected to appear at all the hunts that took place, and the King was pleased to accompany them, either in vast *calèches* to hold ten or twelve, or in little low carriages which he drove himself (and we know he excelled in the art of driving). In singular contrast to his ordinary extravagance, the King, when driving in one of these open carriages, carried with him a little flat untrimmed hat, to replace, in case of rain, the one covered with plumes. The most courageous of the ladies pursued on horseback in all weathers, braving, without a murmur, the wind, the rain, and the snow. Madame la Duchesse d'Orleans, sister-in-law to the King, was perhaps the most *serious* of these devotees of sport. She was present at all the King's hunts, and even at those long and arduous wolf-hunts to which *Monseigneur* (the Dauphin) was devoted, and which often beguiled him and his intrepid aunt many miles from Versailles in the most frightful weather. In

[1] Adelaide of Savoy, married to the grandson of Louis XIV.

the correspondence of *Madame* we read, dated May 15, 1697: 'Saturday I started at eight o'clock in the morning for a place fifteen miles away to hunt the wolf. I did not get back till five o'clock.' We are told that Madame was not beautiful and that she had no regard for her appearance. 'I don't see what people want with so many different costumes,' she writes; 'my only garments are my court dress and the hunting costume in which I ride.' Madame's correspondence is filled with passages expressing her enthusiasm for hunting, and its beneficial effect from the hygienic point of view.

'I go out hunting for the good of my health. . . . I have often got rid of fever by doing so. . . . I have many a time stayed out from morning till five o'clock in the evening, in the summer until nine. I come in as red as a lobster, and with my face all burnt; that is why I have such a rough brown skin.'

'Here' (at Versailles), she writes in November 1695, 'I still hunt a great deal; in the nine days we have been here I have already hunted four times, twice stag and twice wolf. I think exercise on foot is better for the health than riding, but I have become too heavy, and can no longer walk well. So I shall stick to my horse as long as I can.'

A year later she is apparently suffering from depression, and finds hunting the best cure for it, for she writes: 'To get rid of these sad reflections, I hunt as much as I can; but soon [this is very pathetic] my poor horses will not be able to go any more, for Monsieur [her husband] has never bought me new ones, and most certainly he never will. Hitherto the King gave them to me, but now times are bad.' March 7, 1696.

That Madame had many falls out hunting we are not surprised to learn, considering the condition of her stud and the length of the days she gave them. 'I have had twenty-four or twenty-five falls,' she says, 'but it has not frightened me.' In 1697, while wolf hunting with the Dauphin in weather so wet that the ground was soaked with rain, having vainly tried to find for two hours, and at last drawn a fresh cover, a wolf bounded through the legs of Madame's steed, who reared, slipped, and fell on his side. The princess's arm was put out, and (with her usual pluck) she had it put in again by the barber bone-setter of a neighbouring village.

In 1701 Madame still hunted on horseback. A few years later she was only able to follow on wheels, but was still as keen as ever.

One day some ecclesiastics were also hunting on wheels, their

carriage following hers. They were frightened by the stag, and Madame exclaims with pride, 'I have seen more than a thousand stags taken; we old sportsmen are not afraid of stags.' She tells the story in a letter, dated October 20, 1714: 'Last Thursday we hunted rather a troublesome stag. A gentleman crept round a rock behind him and wounded him in the shoulder, so that he could not use his horns any more, and was no longer dangerous. Behind my carriage was another, containing three ecclesiastics—the Archbishop of Lyons and two abbés. Fearing to be attacked by the stag, two of them descended from their carriage and laid themselves flat on the ground, face downwards. I am sorry not to have witnessed this scene, which would have made me laugh.'

The granddaughter of Madame, the young Duchess of Berry, hunted nearly every day, but the grandmother has her suspicions as to the real motives of her zeal. She says that the Duchess fancies herself a keen sportswoman, but that this is not really from her love of the chase; but only from her desire for constant movement. 'She only cares for the finish, and likes it better in boar-hunting than stag-hunting, because she has the chance of eating black puddings and sausages.'

This seems to have been a libel on the part of Madame, who herself, says M. de Noirmont, was no despiser of sausages! The Duchess of Berry had really a more disinterested affection for the chase. She was at all the stag hunts that took place, and pursued the wolf also, on the days she was not boar-hunting with the Duke. She often returned home lamentably wet, with her ladies in the same deplorable condition. Her horse reared on one occasion; she was unseated, but remounted immediately as if nothing had happened, and on coming home absolutely declined to be bled, which at that time was the panacea for all ailments, and even considered advisable in some cases when nothing had happened after all!

Mademoiselle de Chartres, her sister, became a nun, to the great astonishment of Madame, their grandmother. 'I don't believe she has a vocation,' she writes, 'for she has all the tastes of a boy—likes hounds, horses, hunting, and guns, fears nothing in the world, and cares for nothing that other women enjoy.' Another *religieuse*, Madame de Béthisy, canoness of Poussay, loved to carry a gun and to go out hunting. She was twenty-five and very pretty. She amused herself at Poussay in 1742 by shooting at a target, and constantly carried a loaded gun. One day she fell, the gun went off, and the canoness was

mortally wounded. This story is taken from the Memoirs of Luynes. Madame de Suze tells us of another remarkable lady, the Duchess of Bouillon, 'who arms herself with a gun to fight the blue devils, and never returns from the combat without some contusions.' Madame de Bouillon was a niece of Cardinal Mazarin.

The Infanta of Spain, Marie Thérèse, was also accustomed to the use of firearms, and brought her guns with her when she arrived in France. But though she was a good shot, we are told she did not care much for this form of sport. In March 1745 she is taken out hunting by the King. 'The Dauphine wore a hunting dress and hat; she seemed to enjoy herself pretty well, and refused to leave off hunting to have her luncheon.'

The last Queen of France, of the *ancien régime*, Marie Antoinette, showed on her arrival as Dauphine so great a zeal for sport as to alarm her mother, the austere Marie Thérèse of Austria. In a letter dated December 15, 1772, she endeavours to exculpate herself, fancying that more had been said than was true of her cavalcades. The King and the Dauphin, she says, are pleased to see her on horseback, and were charmed when she appeared in hunting costume during the expedition to Compiègne. She confesses that she has no objection to conform to their tastes, but declares she has never allowed herself to be carried away by her love of the chase. 'I hope,' she says, 'in spite of my impulsiveness I shall always allow myself to be controlled by the wise persons who accompany me, and not plunge into excess.'

In a picture by Brown, exposed for sale in 1863, as M. de Noirmont informs us, Marie Antoinette is represented out hunting with the Count d'Artois wearing a blue velvet habit and a large straw hat with white plumes.

One of the most constant followers at the Royal Hunt in 1787 was Josephine de Beauharnais, the successor to the throne of Marie Antoinette. 'The Viscountess is out hunting at this moment,' writes her uncle. 'This evening the King and twenty-five sportsmen arrive. . . . The Viscountess has been out boar-hunting three days, and has seen one boar. She has been wet to the skin, but has made light of it.'

Two years later came the Revolution, and with it terminated the 'History of Sport in France,' as well as the histories of most of her sportsmen.

THE LITTLE WITCH FLY

A TRUE STORY OF A SALMON POOL

BY GEORGE HERBERT NALL

'Now what is that story, Barth, about the pool?' asked Douglas. 'You may as well tell us, though I believe I have found out all about it.'

But Johan Barth turned uneasily in his low chair and refused once more to be drawn.

We were sitting after dinner outside the little white farm, lazily watching the small trout ringing the quiet backwater and the foaming waves curling in the rapid under the opposite rocks. Faintly at intervals came the boom of the surf breaking on the sands at the river's mouth, broken by an occasional sharp splash from a heavy salmon in the centre of the pool. It was a peaceful, warm summer's evening, and I sympathised with the farmer, who was in no mood for spinning gruesome yarns.

Yet there certainly was some mystery about Helgeland Pool. A month ago, when we had come to this river, Johan Barth had shown us over the water himself. It had never been let before, but the take in nets and traps had been very heavy, and our expectations before our arrival were high. To our annoyance we found it only a small river, and for rod-fishing it looked poor; but one pool caught our fancy at the first glance. Below a small foss it spread out gradually into a long deep stretch with large boulders here and there breaking the heavy stream and making splendid lodging places for big fish. It ended in a fan-like tail of almost sluggish water, which would hold fish, we thought, when the river was high. The sides were steep and precipitous, and each cast would need a good climb. Wading

was impossible. There was no boat, and had there been one the water was not suited for boat-fishing. It was a pool that would test one's skill, and looked as though it would repay it. But Barth had passed it with scarcely a glance or a word. No one fished it, he said; it was no good.

Now this often means in the mouth of a Norwegian peasant that the fishing is too difficult for his skill. We doubted his statement, and worked the pool thoroughly day after day, knocking our flies to pieces and ruining our shins, our boots, and tempers on the rocks, but not a fish did we ever see in it, not even a late kelt. The spring and summer had been dry, and there were one or two of these still about. I had given the pool up long ago, but I knew that Douglas still took an occasional cast over its tail.

Above the pool on the side of the fjeld three hundred yards away stood a little deserted cluster of farm buildings. The farm had been tenantless for many years, and Barth, who owned all the property round, had tried again and again to sell it. But no purchaser had yet been found, and the peasants to whom we tried to talk about it clearly avoided the subject. What was the mystery about the farm and the pool?

'I'll tell you the tale,' Douglas went on, with insistent perseverance. 'I got it out of the old woman up at Inge this morning, and I've been testing its truth this afternoon. I saw the fair charmer, and I mean to catch her to-morrow,' and he laughed as if he knew something more.

Johan Barth got up. 'You had better leave the pool alone, Mr. Douglas,' he said in a heavy voice, 'you will get no good from it;' and he walked away visibly vexed.

But Douglas only laughed the more. 'I thought these modern Norwegians were too up-to-date to believe in ghost stories,' said he, 'but Johnny must have a touch of his uncle the poet in him. You remember how we enjoyed those weird legends of his. Well, this tale is rather like one of them. I have picked it up bit by bit from the people about here, and I believe that now I can put it together after my long talk with that old crone up at Inge this morning. When it happened I didn't make out. I wanted Barth to tell us that, and to fill in the gaps; but the tale is something like this.'

He lit another pipe, and leaned back luxuriously in his deck chair.

'It seems that there was once a girl who used to live with her grandfather at that deserted farm above the pool, many years—perhaps centuries—ago. I don't know when. Of course she was

very beautiful in the story, and every man in the place was wild with love for her. But she was poor; they were only tenants without an acre of land; and no one about was rich enough to marry her for love. Then one day the only son of the wealthy farmer who owned Helgeland came home after many years of absence at sea—I am telling the tale in quite the correct romantic style, I hope.

'The young sailor, too, fell in love with the girl, and used to spend all his days up at the little farm, helping her with the farm work and managing the salmon traps and the fishing. (There were formerly big salmon traps, you know, at both ends of the pool; the lower one was only destroyed last year.) For a while they kept their affair more or less secret, but in time it got talked about. One of the meddling women in the neighbourhood went to the old farmer down in the valley and broke the news to him.

'He was furious, of course. There was a savage scene between him and his son, but it ended in the usual way. The son could not and did not want to marry a penniless girl, and the father forced him to leave the place, without even a parting interview with his love.

'Then old Kristian, as the rich farmer was called, went up to the little farm on the fjeld, vowing vengeance upon the couple who had brought, as he considered, such disgrace upon him. He began with blustering threats to turn them out of the farm, and told the girl that he had sent his son away from the country, never to come back till she and her old grandfather had been cleared out of the place. The poor creature rounded upon him and cursed him and his for their cruelty. She vowed that as he had ruined her life so she would be his ruin.

'"May the curse of God be upon you and yours," she cried; "yes, upon your son too, for ruining and deserting me! You think us poor, and weak, and powerless, but as there is a God in heaven I will be avenged upon you."

'Old Kristian left her, followed by her curses. All day long she sat in the house, neglecting the farm-work, with which her lover used to help her. At evening she went down the fjeld towards the river as though to empty the salmon traps. What happened no one knew. She was never seen again in mortal form. That night there was a sudden storm and flood, one of those sudden floods about which Barth warned us when we came. After the flood went down, they found traces of her clothing in some of the bushes by the river-side, but the body had vanished. Her old grandfather was found dead in bed too, but there was no

sign of any violence. Some people thought that she had killed him first and then drowned herself, but no one could tell.

'As for the wealthy old farmer, that sudden flood nearly ruined him. It washed away a number of his cattle, destroyed all his crops and hay along the river banks, and when the water subsided it was found that the sea had broken in and spoilt all his best lands near the shore. He never recovered from the blow, and died before the year was out. The son was still away, so that there was no one to manage the farm. It got into a worse and worse condition; much of the land that remained had fallen back into a state of bog and swamp before the heartless sailor came home again to try to mend his broken fortunes.

'Well, that's the story. The legend about the pool seems to be that the girl still haunts it in the shape of a great phantom fish. They say that she has driven every salmon away from that part of the river, and that she watches there waiting to do mischief to the descendants of the farmer. Any one of them who sees her is certain to meet with some misfortune.'

'It's a sad legend,' said I. 'But you understand now why Barth was so troubled?'

'No, why? He's a strange man when he is in his gloomy moods, but he can't believe it! That would be too absurd. Barth is no fool.'

'I think that he does believe it, partly at any rate,' I replied. 'That explains everything. If you remember, he will never go near the pool if he can help it. And it is on his family that the curse has fallen. Don't you see? It must be so. This is the only large farm within a dozen miles. One of these Barths was the lover, perhaps Johnny himself.'

'Good heavens!' said Douglas, 'I never thought of that, and I have been teasing him about the pool for weeks! And you know we heard this farm *was* twice as large in his father's days, and that Barth was abroad for many years. The white-haired old man whom we sometimes see about the place acted as steward for him, and made a bad mess of everything. Barth told us that once. And so Johnny himself must actually be the very man who loved and ruined the girl. No wonder the people about here won't talk freely about it. Poor old chap! And the story about the girl and the great flood is true. Of course Barth was the lover. But do you think he believes in the curse? And does he really believe the pool is haunted by the girl?'

We were silent for a minute or two.

'But the strangest thing is,' Douglas went on, 'that I have seen the phantom fish myself. Almost every time I have been up the river I have cast over that pool, just for the fun of the thing, and to-day I saw the thing of mystery. Down in that dark sluggish water, at the tail of it, I moved a huge creature, which just came gently half way up to the fly, and then dropped back again. It was so big that it gave me quite a shock. I put some shot on the cast and sunk the fly well down, but I couldn't stir it again. It can't be a salmon in that water. It must be a monstrous trout, and it has been in the pool for years. Some of the natives poaching about here have seen it, and started the tale about the ghost. Well, well, I thought till to-day that I was getting hold of a good ancient ghost story, and we find it's quite modern and down to date. But I'm awfully sorry for poor Barth. I must try to tell him that I am sorry I annoyed him about the pool.'

However, it was too late that night. Barth had gone to bed, and the next morning he was to be up at four o'clock and off on a two days' visit to a distant town.

I was away at a sea-trout lake next day, about six miles off along the coast. Douglas wouldn't come. He wanted to tie some flies, he said, and potter about the place after some duck which he had marked down.

Now Douglas, it should be known, prides himself upon his powers of observation, and the result of many hours spent at the lakeside was that he discovered, or fancied he had discovered, the food on which the sea-trout fed at each special hour of the day. He used to bring in specimens of grubs and worms and insects, and we tied flies to match them. I started with one of his early afternoon patterns, and was quickly fast in a good trout that turned the scale at three and three-quarter pounds. It was followed by several others, all over three pounds, with a few smaller poundlings. I had been too intent on the rising fish to watch the sky, but suddenly I noticed that it was growing dark. There was a distant rumble of thunder, a dull flash, then a brighter, and heavy gusts of wind came sweeping over from the sea. The exposed lake was quickly lashed up into furious waves, which broke over us in clouds of spray, as the gillie boy and I struggled hard to force the boat in the teeth of the wind back to the landing place. It was no good. We had to give up the unequal battle, and fly before the fast gathering hurricane. We beached the boat on the windward side of the lake, made her as safe as we could, and tramped round to pick up the horse and cart.

I shall never forget that awful drive home. The storm was all around us now, the thunder one long continued rattling fusillade, the choking air a blinding maze of lightning that seemed to wrap us in a network of flame, the rain one solid sheet that almost swept us from the cart and washed the sandy road from the feet of the poor trembling horse as it stumbled bravely along. Had not the gale been at our backs, we could never have reached home. After what seemed hours of struggling against instant death, we reached the farm at last, with how deep thankfulness, drenched, exhausted, blinded.

I stripped off my dripping clothes in the entrance passage of our little cottage, and staggered into my bedroom. Douglas was lying on the bed peacefully smoking.

'What luck?' said he.

'Oh, about twenty pounds of good trout,' I answered. 'I was catching the three-pounders with your fly when this awful storm came on. What have you done?'

'I have laid the ghost,' he said. 'I have caught the phantom fish, and poor Barth shall live in peace and quietness.'

'What have you done really?'

'I have caught the big fish I told you about in that pool. It was——' and he broke into peals of laughter.

'Where is it?' said I; 'let me see the monster.'

'All right,' he answered, 'it's down by the side of the pool, under that big loose stone—the "cave," you know. I couldn't carry it home in this storm, so I left it there. You can help me home with it when the rain stops.'

But the rain pelted down heavily and more heavily, and as I dressed Douglas told me his yarn.

'I went up to the pool after lunch,' he said. 'There was a good breeze over the tail of it, but I had fished most of it without a sign of anything. Perhaps the fly didn't suit; but in the very same spot in which I saw the monster yesterday I had a tremendous tug, deep down in the water. I was fishing deep,' he explained with a mysterious air. 'The water was slack, so I struck hard, but I thought at first I was in a rock or a stump of wood. Then the lump settled slowly down to the bottom, and there it stayed. I had put on a tremendously strong cast—I'll show it you directly—so I pulled the fish all I could, but the beggar hardly moved. I began to pelt it with stones, but it only dropped down a little lower, and went swimming round and round like an old eel. I was getting sick of it when that storm suddenly broke over us. I hadn't been looking about me, so I

was quite unprepared for it. But it woke the old fish up. Directly it heard the first peal of thunder it made a wild dash up the pool, and I had a high time of it for half an hour. It never showed above the water, but dashed up and down the pool, round those rocks (I thought it would have broken me a dozen times), and all over the place. The thunder was roaring above me, and loose stones came pelting down round me from that dangerous scree. The storm was so close that I thought I was struck again and again by the lightning. I am sure one flash did catch the rod and went running down the line to the fish. I should never have got the beggar if it had kept its head, but at that flash it made a wild rush down stream, trying to get into the pool below. I gave it a good helping lift away to the right, and before it could stop itself it was floundering in the shallows among those loose stones. I ran for it, jumped into the water, which was much drier than I was, got my arms under it, and hoisted it on to the bank. My goodness, it was a fish! I have never seen anything like it about here. If it had been in good condition it would have been fifty pounds.'

'A salmon, of course? No monstrous trout, as you fancied?'

He nodded.

'What does it weigh?' I asked.

'I don't know,' he answered; 'we will go and weigh it together when this rain stops.'

I was wildly excited. The biggest fish we had seen so far was well under twenty pounds, and no tales of any over thirty pounds were current in the place.

'What was the fly?' I asked.

'I like to think that I am a bit superstitious, you know,' he said, 'it adds such an interest to the dullest things; so after you had left I rigged up a new fly for the pool. There's an idea, isn't there? that you have to shoot witches and ghosts and that sort of thing with silver bullets; so I suppose one ought to fish for them, when they masquerade as salmon or trout, with silver hooks. I couldn't find any of those naturally in your tackle case, so I hit on a happy idea. Look at this.'

He handed me a heavy uncouth lump of draggled, half-dried feathers, looking something like a caterpillar that had swallowed a big stone. The protuberance in the stomach was rather loose, so I twisted it about a bit and saw a glint of white metal through the fur.

'Don't spoil my little witch fly,' protested Douglas. 'It's

I HAD A HIGH TIME OF IT FOR HALF AN HOUR

only a lucky sixpence that I worked into the body. But it did the trick. And there's the magic cast.'

He threw me a length of fine but very strong silver chain.

'Anyhow, they sank the fly well,' said he; 'witch or no witch, she's dead by the pool side now. We'll go and fetch her soon.'

But the rain was driving down in one solid sheet of grey; the little wooden cottage was rocking and moaning in the fierce blasts. There was no question now of fetching the fish. We began to fear we should never get across the field to the farm building for our dinner.

It was a dreary evening and a drearier night. There was little sleep for either of us, and early next morning we were up and dressed.

The rain had ceased for a while, but the sky was still black and low. The quiet backwater by which we had sat two nights ago was now a yellow frothy lake, creeping menacingly foot by foot up the orchard towards the walls of the little white farm. The curling rapid under the opposite rocks was a savage torrent, topped with brown foam, sweeping along grass and bushes and shocks of corn.

After breakfast the yellow backwater had crept four feet nearer the farm; seven feet more and it would be lapping the house walls. As with fascinated eyes I watched the foul water rushing past, the farmer's wife came and tapped me suddenly on the shoulder. I saw that she was in a state of great alarm.

'They say that Lauritz has gone out in the boat to try to find some of the things that were swept away last night,' she said. 'I am afraid. Barth is away. What shall I do?'

Douglas and I rushed through the wet bushes, across the long dripping grass, over the loose stone wall to the meadow. Lauritz was there in the light pram, a ten-year-old sturdy boy, tossing helplessly in the savage eddies. As we stopped for a moment to fix our purposes, a great wave hurled the boat on a half-covered rock; it stood for a moment, then swung round, tilted over, and the boy was in the water clinging wildly to an oar.

In a flash I remembered the story of the curse—the girl, the pool, the fish. Was it all true? Had the flood come again to exact vengeance on Barth's family? Was his only boy now to be drowned before our eyes? Had Douglas roused the curse?

To attempt to swim across that savage rapid seemed madness. I rushed back to the orchard, where we had made the boats fast to the trees. One of the farm men had run down to the pool.

He and I jumped into a boat together and went plunging down the stream.

As we rounded the bend of the river before the long stretch in which Lauritz had upset, I caught sight of Douglas. He was in the water half across the river, but about thirty yards still above the boy. He had calculated it exactly, and would be swept by the stream straight past the rock. We steadied the boat and tried to drift it down upon the two, but the eddies caught us and tossed us here and there. I saw Douglas reach the boy and grip him; a second later we came swaying down upon them. Throwing my oar to the man I leant over the side to catch at Douglas. As I reached out the boat gave a lurch, it spun round, I missed them by a yard, and we went whirling down the stream with the white set face of Douglas gazing despairingly in my eyes.

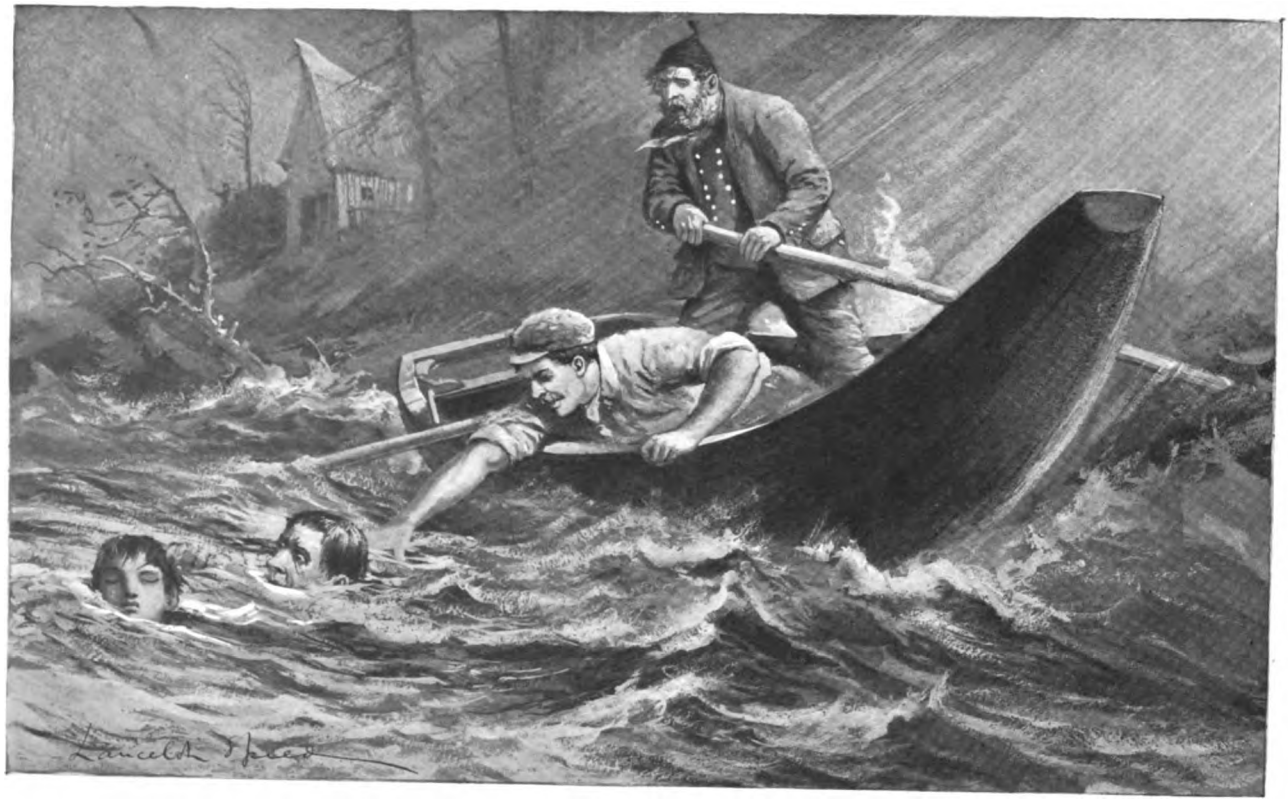
As I looked a big wave struck him full in the face, and he sank, still clutching the boy. It was a terrible moment. We got the boat round again, forced it up stream on the near side of the river, where there was a bit of a back current, and then turned it again across the rapid where we hoped the two would rise. I leaned over the side and made a wild clutch at a tangle of hair that suddenly appeared half under the boat. My fingers caught. The man drew the boat off into the slack current, and between us we pulled the two into the boat. Both seemed dead, but Douglas's hand was firmly locked round Lauritz's collar.

We carried them up to the farm and tried our best to restore life. Douglas soon came round and in an hour seemed little the worse for his ducking, but it was long before Lauritz returned to consciousness. Before noon, however, they brought the news that he was better, and seemed likely to recover.

The next few days were too full of trouble and anxiety for me to think for more than a passing moment about the great fish which Douglas reported had been swept away, and to wonder at its strange connexion with the almost fatal flood.

But this subsided as rapidly as it had risen, and as the water sank foot by foot so Lauritz steadily regained strength. A few evenings later we were sitting again in our chairs outside the little farm watching the white ducks splashing in the oozy swamp, which was all the trace of the great flood that remained in the orchard which fringed the quiet backwater.

Barth, whom we had scarcely seen for the last week, came out from the farm, and with renewed expressions of gratitude sat



I MISSED THEM BY A YARD

down in the third chair by our side. He was a changed man. In spite of Lauritz's illness and the damage wrought to his crops by the flood, he was brighter and happier than we had ever seen him before. To me it seemed that a heavy load had been lifted from his mind.

'I went up the river this afternoon,' he said, briskly. 'The water will be in good order for you gentlemen to-morrow. I saw a great many salmon.'

'Where?' we both asked eagerly.

Barth hesitated for the fraction of a second. 'In Helgeland Pool,' he answered, with the faintest sign of embarrassment.

Douglas nodded at me. 'It will be the best pool on the river now,' he said meaningly.

Barth looked at him steadily, and was silent for a minute.

'It was you, then, Mr. Douglas, that killed the big fish up there,' and he pointed to the distant farm. 'None of the men about here would have done it.'

'It was I,' answered Douglas—and he added under his breath to me, 'I and my little witch fly.'—'But how did you find it? I thought the flood had washed it away. It is gone.'

'I saw it on the bank two days ago, when the water had fallen a little, so I brought it home and buried it,' said Barth. He was silent for a moment, and then, evidently anxious to express his gratitude, and yet half ashamed, as it seemed to me, of revealing his superstitious fears, he went on: 'We are most grateful to you for all that you have done.' He chatted for a little while longer about the crops and the fishing, and then walked away.

As soon as we were alone I turned to Douglas. 'You see that Barth really did believe that there was some mysterious bond between the girl and the fish. He thinks that you have removed the curse by killing the fish and saving the boy.'

Douglas was vastly amused at my notion. He maintained that Barth's thanks had referred once more to Lauritz and not to the fish.

'Did you see the Priest about here just before dinner?' he asked.

'Yes; what about him?'

'I expect,' said Douglas chaffingly, 'Barth has been giving the poor fish a Christian burial; we must go and see the grave in the morning.'

After a short search in the garden next day I found among the tangled bushes a newly made grave, railed round with rough

trellis-work, a bunch of dark blue gentians at the head of it and a wreath of scarlet rowan berries at the foot. I taxed Douglas with placing them there before I was up, but he pretended absolute ignorance.

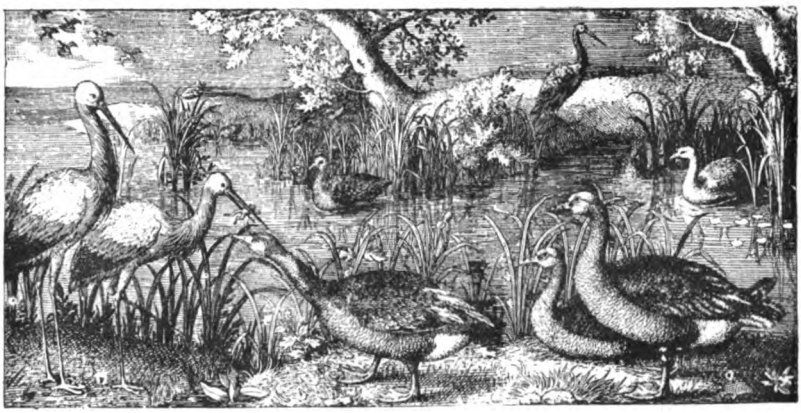
'Of course, it's Barth's tribute to the maiden,' said he. 'A Christian burial and a Christian tomb for a poor——kelt.'

'A *what*!' I exclaimed in righteous horror.

'Oh, well,' said Douglas, 'I had better confess, for I don't want you to hurt your own feelings and poor Barth's by violating the grave in order to get a sight of the monster. The phantom fish was just a huge, misshapen kelt, but the biggest I ever saw; and as it was so late in the season I kept it to show you instead of returning it to the water as I should have done. I don't wonder that it scared the poaching peasants and made them think it was a ghost, and of course Barth was glad enough to bury it and hide my infamous deed. But as for the rail and the flowers, I believe you put them there yourself; you are far more superstitious than a stolid old fellow like Barth.'

But Douglas's ridicule did not shake my belief. Barth was a changed man. The haunted anxious look had vanished from his eyes. Whether he had shared the peasants' superstition, and how far he had identified the poor kelt with the phantom of the pool, I could never make out, nor was I ever sure who decorated the grave; but it was clear that something had happened to him which made him feel that the spell was broken. How different it might have been if his boy had been drowned!

When, day after day, the once worthless Helgeland Pool proved itself the best on the whole river, even the sceptical Douglas became almost a believer in the power of the curse. The flood had certainly knocked it about, and some of the casts were quite changed. This might be the cause, but who could tell? The phantom, too, had undoubtedly vanished. No monstrous form was again seen by superstitious poachers haunting the sluggish tail of the pool, and if Douglas's deliberate efforts were successful, no doubt the peasants have accepted from his lips a new conclusion to their tale, telling how amid the wild turmoil of that now famous storm the ghostly fish was at last slain and the spell broken by the young Englishman's little witch fly.



CREATURES OF THE NIGHT

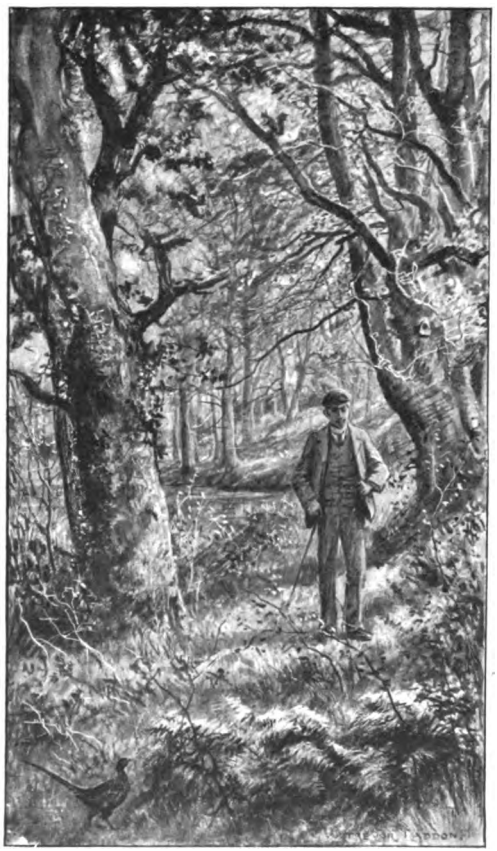
BY F. A. W. REES

HAVE any of my readers ever set out, forgetful of care, to enjoy in no stinted measure the glories of sunset, and afterwards the luscious tranquillity of a summer night, alone, save for the little people of the fields and hedgerows and woods? Have they learnt a habit—once learnt never forsaken, for it grows on you—of sitting motionless, close to the trunk of some oak, when the moon is up, and the forest presents the spectacle of alternate lines of light and shade, varied as in the hollows darkness is more intense? You creep, with the stealth natural to prowlers of the night, down illumined glades across which there stretch those long lines of shadow that are cast from tall trees. Now and again you feel the touch of a severed gossamer on your cheek; a drifting spider has collided with you, or you have carried away a part of his tight-rope by which he bridged the space from tree to tree. You reach your post of observation; it is where the shadow is deepest, so there you may remain unseen, if perfectly motionless, even by the hungry fox.

My first glimpses of the night side of wood life, of that part of it which lures decent men on to become poachers, were obtained when a boy out 'sugaring' for moths in the Tunnel Woods. So charmed was I by what I then saw that, in after years, when the day's toil was over, instead of bed I often sought the rest of sweet court with Nature out in her fastnesses, and

went home to sleep just as the following day was stealing through the window from the east.

Nature's ways seem a rare tangle of contradictions. She has decreed that the gentlest of her children must fall a prey to their stronger neighbours. Timid folk must work, build, play by night; in the day so many enemies are about that then they must lie quiet in their nests and burrows. But even at night, when strong things should (by reason of their strength being able to work by day) be asleep, and cease from troubling, harmless creatures are still in momentary peril of their lives, for they are threatened by owls that glide noiselessly, or by polecats, weasels, poacher-cats, that steal upon them unawares.



DOWN ILLUMINED GLADES

How perfectly trained are the senses of those harassed weaklings so threatened! Environment has made them so. Yet has a relenting Providence softened the wind to some of the shorn lambs of her thousand flocks. How quickly a rabbit will, upon appearing from underground, go to earth again directly the busy nose scents a fox that has just passed by up-wind! But the fox almost invariably keeps on his way or tacks across-wind; so hunt the weasel and his tribe, except the otter, that lives in the water of course, but there, in like manner, generally works against stream or from bank to bank across. A 'vear's' strong scent will apparently cause field-voles to migrate from a stack

round which he has formed the habit of sneaking, and rabbits will leave buries that have been tainted by polecat or stoat. The barn owl has been given wings of a ghostly whiteness, although, withal, they are noiseless ones with none of the clatter of pheasants' quills about them; and at the first sign of these leisurely moving pinions the vole raises himself on his hind legs to gaze for an instant, then scurries to a welcome sanctuary among bents and fallen leaves, with low squeak of warning to mate and young.

Other creatures also hear and understand. In the fields and woods all notes of warning are rightly interpreted; a screaming blackbird, for instance, will start many a round of hide-and-seek among the small deer. But not always is the mouse in time. If you want evidence of this, go to the old outhouse on the margin of the wood next morning, stop up the holes under the eaves, and surprise the goggle-eyed bird as he squats blinking at the daylight. In his rage and fright the barn owl will disgorge unmistakable evidence of a meal in which mice were a substantial course; unless a host of young toads or frogs, migrating from the pond where they were hatched out, had passed his way, in which case the evidence would not be, so much of it, mice.

The owl tempts me to digression. What a fit subject for a practical joke! But sometimes the laugh turns round about, for as I have heard it expressed: 'e's such a slippy customer; 'as got a decent clem (notion or idea) about using his lissom clawrs.' Good tale-tellers add a sauce to their yarns by looking grave, while you, who have heard them, are in an agony of mirth. So with the barn-owl; through all his jokes his features are a protest that he is a harmless, misunderstood creature.

In the old school-days long ago some of us naturalists, having shrewdly guessed where two barn owls lived, set out one Saturday afternoon to circumvent the day-dreamers. Unluckily, I was selected for special duty. So up I climbed by way of a rough paling on to the tiles, with feet hanging over, and knees moving softly with a rub, rub, bad for cloth. Boughs of tree-ivy assisted me materially; still I suppose I must have rattled things about in a style too great for the owls' nerves. Out came the cock-bird when my face was just a foot away from the opening in the old pigeon-cote. Immediately I sprang on a projecting stone, one leg on that, one on the slates, right hand clutching the ivy, and the left free. My head and shoulders filled the hole, but alack! the hen-owl was there.

She wanted to leave; I was equally desirous of preventing her. And so for me began a rather unpleasant time. The wretch scrambled, such was her hurry, up my shoulders and face, and got her claws mixed up somehow with my eyes, nose, mouth, and ears. One hind-claw was probing my nostril, while the fore-claw drew down the skin just beneath my eye. She accompanied her war-dance over my features with a gurgle-urgle-urgle! and ook! ook! ook! as she brought down her beak with much purpose on my cap.

The pain was—well, I leave it to you to think over. I dared not leave go my hold on the ivy, else those palings below, and broken limbs or ribs. So I lashed out with my left fist, then crammed it into the hole, and at last got the owl by the crop, when I tore her from my face and out through the orifice, breaking a wing in forcing her through an opening too narrow. She dropped on the grass, and with the help of one of my fellows I was soon alongside her. There on her back, with ready talons and feeble ook! ook! lay Mrs. Barney, while my companions rolled about, mad with laughter, at the sight of my woe-begone face. It was scratched all over, my poor face, down the cheek-bones especially, so was my left hand; while my nose bled from the dibbing of that sharp hind-claw, and my hair and neck were littered with lumps of fur and feathers, as well as with sundry half-digested bits of birds and field-vole. Wise bird of Pallas Athene, indeed (we had been reading up that morning about birds sacred to the gods)! say rather, corrected classic, that this was a gaping, vacant, scratching fool of a good-y-whoo. What should we do with the good-y-whoo (every owl is here called a good-y-whoo)? Leave her there with broken wing we couldn't. Carry her home! Who would volunteer to clasp that hussy in his gentle arms? Luckily we thought of an old wintell (garden-basket used by field-toilers) we had seen in the tool-house; this we turned upside-down over her. Then to the neighbouring rill to wash burning cheeks, remove the remnants of the owl's meal, and think.

All plans but one we abandoned; that one was to get long hazel-sticks and convert the wintell into a cage, by interlacing these wands under the feet, or, rather, under the back of the good-y-whoo, through the plait of the basket. So we bore our captive home, caught mice for her consolation, patched her up generally with the aid of an interested old doctor friend, cut her claws, and frightened her out of her hissing and pecking. All this took up some time, but eventually her fierceness was forgotten, and she

OUT CAME THE COCK-BIRD WHEN MY FACE WAS JUST A FOOT FROM THE OPENING

condescended to a show of affection. The bone of her wing set askew, but this misfortune, which rendered equilibrium in flight impossible, prevented a departure back to the old tool-house in the orchard, across the river, up high over the wood.

The luckiest of weaklings is the bat. He has a peculiar way of his own; he is quite unique as regards the manipulation of his wings (it is *manipulation*, for he has his leathery flying apparatus held out from his sides by what we may call his *hands*). He is a mouse gone wrong. What a jerky, funny flight he has! One would imagine he had visited our sugaring-patch in the wood-clearing, and got a little of the rum-and-molasses stowed away. Or that he had there been down among the drunken moths at the foot of the tree, where these, through surfeit of themselves, caused tipsiness in their devourer. No owl or other winged creature can turn so quickly as he can whilst he twists and tumbles among the tall trees. He scarcely suffers harm, save from those restless parasites that tickle him so as he is trying to rest in his hot, stuffy retreat during the day. This luckiest creature of all is, rather unfairly it must seem, antagonistic to those unluckiest of night's wanderers, the moths we have mentioned. So easily can the bat see an amorous moth, as with white wings all of a quiver the delicate insect hovers around its wingless mate in the tree. Poor, unlucky, white moths! Wrens and woodpeckers are contantly prying about for them under the leaves by day; if they dare fly off at the intrusion, 'tis whir-r-r-rh! and a sparrow or fly-catcher brings them home as food for unfledged nestlings. In the evening the goat-sucker or fern-owl from the highest branch of an ash is ever in readiness, as he stands mocking a spinner from the wool-factory near by, for white moths; and, alas! at night there comes that lunatic, turnabout, St. Vitus dance struck bat, together with some more of the goat-sucker tribe.

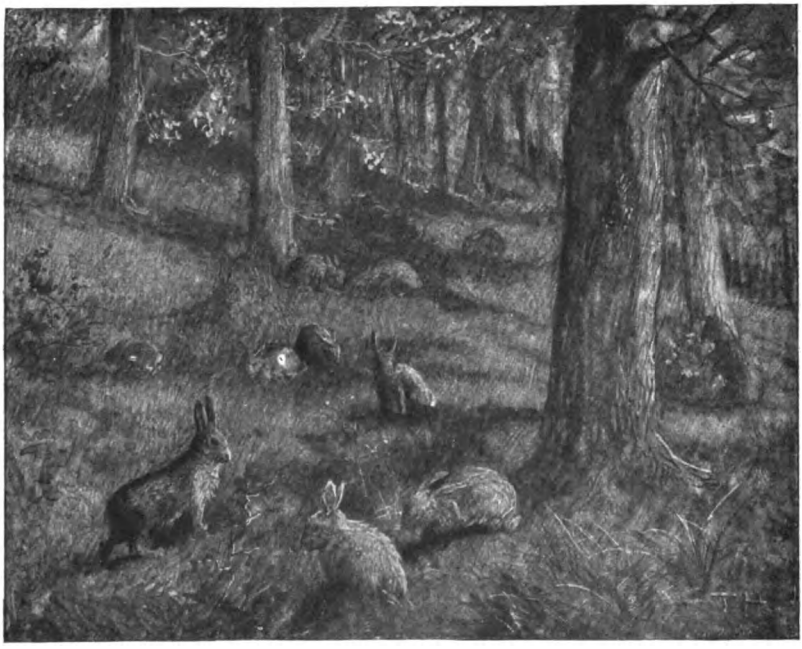
Beautiful white moths, no wonder that from her pity Nature does dole out a little half-measure, and with apologetic solicitude, as if shamed, takes her wonderful pencil and marks your wings with brown, grey, and yellow, so that the prying bird may take you, haply, for the broken end of a decayed twig,[1] if you only fold them over your back, and tuck away your antennæ out of sight.

From a shadowed coign of vantage, when quiet and watchful in the heart of the moonlit wood, you may see many wonderful panoramic views, all the pictures being framed in the silver and grey of night.

[1] The writer is here thinking of the Bufftip (*Bucephala*).

The rabbits sit out in the moonbeams feeding or scratching their ears with hind-feet. Whsh! there is not one to be seen. Ah, just so! Shambling along with half-hop, half-gallop, down the narrow path goes a polecat, and vanishes into the thorn-scrub. By-and-by the rabbits come out to play again.

What is that fiendish, blood-curdling yell? Surely it is too early, before the first frosts, for the vixen to call her lord! But no, there comes the short grunt, yap-yap! from that plantation of young firs. A few minutes go by, then yah-h-h! the vixen



THE RABBITS SIT OUT IN THE MOONBEAMS

screams again close by. Two balls of fire look out from the undergrowth, and lifting her pads gingerly, with brush hanging low, she steals along by the bilberry bushes, and stops to watch over a burrow, crouching near the 'bolt hole' with pointed ears and shoulder-blades showing clear. She waits patiently for awhile, then creeps round to the main door of the bury, and squats over the entrance, listening attentively for a rabbit coming out. Suddenly out runs a coney from a hole behind, sees her, and bolts back. Another appears at the far corner and goes off among the bilberries. A third comes out from beneath her very

A FOURTH, HOWEVER, BECOMES VICTIM

nose, but she is peering back over her shoulders after the rabbit in the bushes, and her chance vanishes into a hole scarce two yards away. The watcher cannot help thinking, and he smiles to himself at the thought of a day's shooting in Devonshire, when he failed at a turned-down coney, and the farmer who accompanied him kept on shouting: 'I knawed 'e'd a missed 'n zur; I knawed 'e'd a missed 'n; aw! aw! there goes my little rabbat-pie.' A fourth, however, becomes victim; the fight is short and sharp, the kicking, squealing quarry is pinned by those cruel fangs, killed, and carried off in less time than I take to tell it. Into the shadow disappears the chief actor in this tragedy.

If you have ever seen a fox close by, pursuing his way unsuspectingly, or an otter fishing near you, then you have realised the art of keeping quiet. Few have learned this art. Lift your hand, ever so slightly, and warning instantly passes: that tyrant man is near. No other visitor is capable of like motion; none save man stalks about on two legs, instead of four, with upright, stilt-like movement, and flesh gleaming.

I do not go so far as to say that smoking is fatal to successful night watching, but the aroma and fire arouse suspicion; this suspicion often ends in headlong flight. On the other hand, so inquisitive are the creatures of the night that any strange scent or sight lures them into the circle of observation. The scent of a cigar has about it quite a different perfume from that usually associated with the turpentine and gum of the pine woods; and fire always tempts things to play with it.

Whatever part of Nature's dominions you may be exploring, whether in the heart of the wood or of the waste, whether you be trouting, salmon-fishing, partridge-shooting, rabbit-ferreting, duck-'coying, insect-hunting, or night-prowling, one thing it is absolutely necessary to remember. It is that your garb must be sombre, not too light, nor too dark; and that clothes must not flap about you. Some shade like the brown of a chestnut is good. You must not display the gorgeous get-up of a Londoner down for grouse-driving.

In the meadow under the wood corncrakes are gossiping loudly craak-craak! craak-craak! the night through, as they wander in and out, feeding among the tussocks of tall lush grasses. A harsh noise they make, but withal pleasant, for they tell of sweltering nights, short summer ones in the clearest, brightest time of the year, when only evening showers occasionally fall to cool and sweeten the gentle breezes.

Presently a grey bird appears, near the oak where the watcher stands, hawking close to the ground, then rising suddenly to wheel round the branches. Moths must be plentiful to-night, for that is the fern-owl, our old friend, and his food seems abundant enough for no need of far wandering. Let me describe him from life. Big head, wings of marvellous power, tail long and reaching just beyond the tips of his wings when they are folded, very short dark-brown legs. The upper mandible slightly overlaps the lower, and along them grows a fringe of hair that serves the purpose, I should think, of preventing small moths escaping when once caught from the mouth kept so inordinately open. Beautifully pencilled and mottled is the summer plumage of the night-jar. There occurs a slight parting in the lighter feathers of the neck; this shows a looseness of skin and the presence of a big pouch in which moths and flies are stored. A line of dark-brown feathers runs down the back of the head, and the wing-coverts are deep brown, fringed with lighter rich brown or dull buff. Primary quills and coverts dark-brown tapering to a shade of grey, barred with rich light brown, and, at the ends, with duller mottlings of grey. Tail-feathers dusky, and mottled with a fine bluish-grey; underneath four feathers tipped with white. This bird is a distant relative of the swift, and lays two beautiful, mottled, oval eggs on the bare ground.

The night-jar is here called the weaver, from the sound of his drumming in the evening; it should be spinner instead, as the incessant whr-r-r-rh! is more like the running home of the carrier to the spools than the twang! twang! of the shuttle thrown through the loom. This bird has a habit of sharply clapping his wings together above his head; his powers of flight almost equal those of the swallow.

Now homewards. There is a general rustle in the bushes when I leave my hiding-place, continued till the gate at the end of the drive is reached, as the rabbits flee from the approaching footstep. Afterwards, wandering along by the river, I hear the oft-repeated thip! or thop! as of little or lusty trout sucking in flies at the surface. In a pool close by the old village bridge some small dark objects are swimming about, disturbing with waves raised in their wake the glassy tranquillity of the secluded backwater; they are a pair of water-hens, with chicks in the rear. Fortunately for them their habitat has never been visited by ravenous pike, or some of those chicks might not see morning. As I enter the village a brace of setters start a general chorus in the kennels, and all along my way from hearth and

cellar comes clear the incessant chirrup-chirrup-chirrup! of the cricket.

So I laid me down, and the last sight before sleep comes is the picture of grey dawning; the last sounds are those of a whispering river and a clamouring corncrake without, and of a noisy cricket downstairs. Pan is *not* dead.

ON A HEREFORDSHIRE BRIDGE

'HERE lyeth the body of the right honorable the Lord Arthur Somerset, youngest son of Henry Duke of Beaufort. He died at Poston, June the 21st, 1743, ætat 72.'

Such is the inscription on a brass tablet on an upright oak pillar in Vowchurch Church in the Golden Valley in Herefordshire.

'The Golden Valley!' The name sounds well, and in colouring it is a golden valley, or rather a valley of green and gold. To-day a plain of golden buttercups, bordered on each side with woodlands of deep green oak and ash; here and there a venerable patriarch that has looked on the changes of centuries, but for the most part far-stretching woods of oak coppice, a degenerate race, speaking of a noble ancestry sacrificed to the necessities of the lords of the soil. In the centre of this valley lies the little village of Vowchurch. The churchyard is approached by a bridge over the little river Dore, and inside the church is the tablet erected to the memory of a long bygone Lord Arthur Somerset, who died and was buried here. He appears to have been the owner of the Poston Court estate, which still exists, and comprises the greater part of the parish. The prefix Vow or Fow is interpreted as meaning the haunt of the

wild beast, but there is no trace of Lord Arthur having been a mighty hunter, and nothing is told as to his pursuits as a country gentleman.

But there is a strange record of sport, or rather it may be called of the destruction of wild beasts, and it is to be found in a place where one would hardly look for it—that is, in the parish church.

An old book (date 1756) contains a number of items which appear to have been paid by the parish officers of that date, and a strange story it is of sport and country life one hundred years ago. What would the followers of the Blue and Buff say to cub-hunting after the fashion of 1756, when a certain Phil Seaborne or Fred Cook received one shilling for bringing in two 'gubb' (*sic*) foxes? How they obtained these 'gubb foxes,' or whether they were dead or alive, the book does not say; we can only take it that they were paid for.

A short extract from the parish book of 1756 is worth noting down, it is such a strange jumble. The first item we find is a payment of one shilling for a fox, to 'Mr. Cornewall's Huntsman.' Then comes a sorrowful tragedy in epitome, concerning a certain lady in the place, of whom we read that Matthew Seaborne was paid two shillings for bleeding her six times, and then—a most pathetic entry—'For drink at her funeral, 2/.'

Immediately following this, a short entry occurs, 'Huntsman 1 shirt and a britches. To a cub fox Mr. Delahay's huntsman 1/. Ditto two foxes, 2/.'

Sandwiched between this last and the following: 'Mr. Delahay's Huntsman, a wild cat sixpence,' we find 'a book of fasting for parson. Mr. Smith's huntsman, a large fox 1/. An Iron for Stocks. Mr. Scudamore's Huntsman, a fox 1/.'

In this way was the hunting of the fox carried on about a century ago. We may gather, I fancy, that each squire in this part of the world kept a huntsman, and we may presume some few hounds. At dawn they started, and if they came on the drag of a fox or a badger they stuck to it till run to earth. Then after a long dig the animal secured in a sack was taken round the neighbourhood and collections made, first of all from the parish authorities, and then from private individuals, to reward the captors of the enemy of the poultry-yard.

This was the custom not forty years ago, only with this difference, that it was no longer the squire's huntsman, but some poacher or rat-catcher, who with gun, or trap, or terrier, was always on the look-out for a fox. When captured he was taken

all round the farmhouses, and a shilling and a jug of cider was expected. To this day a treacherous act lies on my conscience. I had just taken my degree at Oxford, with a higher class in hunting than in the classics, and on settling down at home, took a great interest in the formation of a small rough pack, who were preparing to take possession of a hitherto unhunted country in the coming season. One evening I was told that a certain old man, a companion of my childhood in all sorts of expeditions (had we not once dug out a badger unassisted by anyone else?) wished to see me.

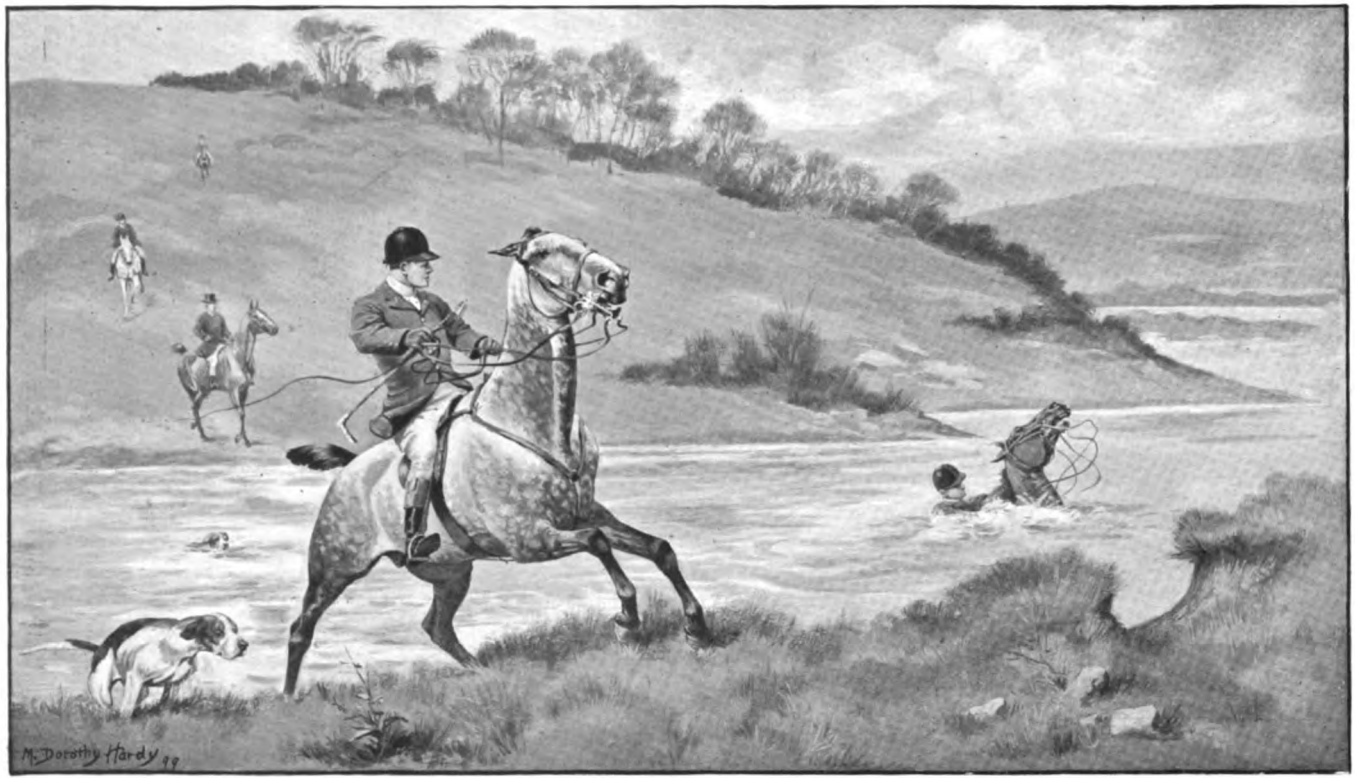
The interview was short. 'I've got a nice fox, master; please to give me a shilling!' 'Let me look at him,' was my preliminary request, before I decided upon an answer to the demand, and the sack was opened. Curled up in the bottom was a fine dog fox. The temptation was too great: one shake of the sack, out bundled the fox on to the drive, and then away for liberty! Whether this was the same fox or not I do not know, but there was one who gave us some capital runs from a covert close by for two or three seasons.

What pleasant recollections does the picture of Vowchurch Bridge bring to me! On this bridge I can still remember, as a very little lad, being taken to see the otter-hounds which were brought over by the young Marquess of Worcester (the late Duke of Beaufort). In those days it was a sport seldom enjoyed in these parts; since then we have had many pleasant days with the Hawkstone, and the red stockings and blue coats have often made a pretty picture on the bridge. When the Duke of Beaufort came with his hounds, the spear—long since, I am glad to say, given up—was in use, and an otter was speared by one of the Duke's friends.

A small stream like the Dore does not really afford any sport, and once I saw a sorry sight not far from the bridge, when a vixen otter and some very small cubs were killed. It was an unavoidable accident, but there was a look of sadness on the face of one well-known M.F.H., who gave up otter-hunting for some time.

On the side of the valley within a few hundred yards of the bridge is Chanstone Wood. This was a favourite covert with Lord Gifford when he hunted the country some fifty years ago. He used to say it was one of the finest scenting coverts that he knew.

What a fine sportsman and, in those days, what a fine horseman, was the late Lord Gifford! One sort of fence he revelled



THE HORSE WITH HIS RIDER WAS PLUNGED INTO A DEEP POOL BELOW THE FORD

in, and that was a Herefordshire stile. There was one at the bottom of Chanstone Wood that he always selected when throwing his hounds into covert; a hogbacked stile uphill, not a thing that would splinter into fragments if you hit it, but with a top bar, a limb of an oaktree, convex and unbreakable. It was a sight to see Lord Gifford jump this, never turning his eyes from hounds, but leaving the great grey to do it in his own way, as if the rider had no time to attend to so small a detail. And a sight also was the quaint figure following him on foot, with his coat thrown back over his arm, his white shirtsleeves conspicuous in all weathers, a tall, napless hat on the back of his head, his fine old face beaming with delight, the father of Herefordshire cricket, and keen lover of woodland hunting, the Reverend Frank Baker of Allensmore. I do not know whether he was ever on a horse or not; but however long the day, or however far from home, he was sure to be close to the hounds to the last.

Amateur huntsmen seem to be the rule of the day, but an amateur whipper-in is the exception. An excellent one who acted for Lord Gifford at that time was the late Lord Fitzhardinge (Captain Berkeley). One day the hounds met at Chanstone, and the little river Dore was coming down a roaring flood, red from the streams flowing down the sides of the hills which shut in the valley. The hounds crossed the flooded stream, the Master forded at a place well known to him, and the whipper-in followed, but getting a little too low, his horse was swept off his legs, and with his rider, was plunged into a deep pool below the ford. A tremendous struggle, and one that for a time looked very dangerous, followed, but at last both horse and man got out, red as Indians on the warpath from the cold plunge.

To this day these big woodlands hold a grand breed of foxes, and many a fine run has been unchronicled, for the simple reason that no horseman has been able to live with hounds over the cramped country intersected with deep, rocky streams, that lies between Chanstone and St. Margaret's Park and the Black Mountains. The real home of the foxes that have given the best runs is in the Black and Red Darrens; precipitous cliffs on the mountain-side. In these strongholds the vixens lay up their cubs, and when food gets short, or a change of diet seems desirable, vixen and cubs leave the mountain-side for the game preserves of the Golden Valley. Whether it is a 'keeper's story' or not I cannot tell, but one old man told me he had seen an old fox and seven cubs crossing a patch of moorland in the late evening with their noses pointed for Chanstone Wood. In the

early autumn, before the leaf is off, the cubs stick to these big woods, though they are not their birthplace; but when once the new year comes in, it is a different story. Once found, a fox, whether it be the old dog on a visit to his family, or the vixen, or a cub, straight to the old mountain home is the point where the old ones, at least, have found safety before. When once a fox's mind is made up to go for the mountain, nothing will turn him from his point; and I well remember, some years ago, one facing a blizzard blowing from the mountain, right in the teeth of the storm, swerving neither to right nor left, and, in spite of a burning scent, running clean away from the hounds, who seemed unable to face the hurricane.

Some two years ago I had occasion to visit a mountain farmhouse that looked upon the Black Mountain, when there came across the distant moor a faint sound as of hounds in full cry. I thought it must be fancy, as no hounds met anywhere near on that day, a Thursday. I paid my visit, and when I left the house, still there was the same sound, though coming from a different direction. Presently it died away in the distance, and I thought no more of the matter, except to reflect, that as I grew older I must be growing either more deaf or more fanciful. The next day proved that my ears had not deceived me. The Monmouthshire hounds had found a fox in a covert at the eastern side of the Black Mountain. This gallant fox faced the steep slope, and ran the whole length of the mountain from east to west. The field were all thrown out, and hounds left to themselves.

They must have driven their fox for two or three hours after leaving the heather, and turning to the eastward again, ran him close to the farmhouse where I last heard them. I saw the farmer the next morning, and he told me he had found the hounds close to his buildings, having killed their fox. This they had done without any assistance, as, for four hours, not a horseman had been near them. A few hill farmers or their families had seen them flash by their homesteads, and so I was able to make out the line they ran, by riding round the hills the next day. I believe I am right in saying that fifteen and a half couple of hounds were taken out of the kennels in the morning, and the farmer told me he counted fifteen couple into his barn, well littered down with clean, sweet straw. Given a good scent, it shows what hounds can do when left to themselves. It must have been a grand run, and over a great extent of country, but not so great as one over the same district which took place a hundred years ago, on February 12, 1797. I have the old song by me,

which, though the rhythm does not equal that of Scott, or the hunter's poet, Whyte Melville, still has a quaint style about it, and certainly describes a run that has never been equalled for distance, whatever the pace may have been. The fox that gave this great run was found in St. Margaret's Park; the finish is thus described:

> The rest of the pack limping in one by one,
> Seemed pleased when they saw that the business was done;
> For when Reynard no longer his vigour could boast,
> To the hounds he surrendered and gave up the ghost.
>
> James Careless soon came who had tired his nag,
> And as for himself was scarce able to wag,
> For ninety-eight miles! (all bad ground I protest),
> This man, horse, and dogs, not one moment did rest.

An amusing incident happened on the Black Mountain half a dozen years ago. Late in September, two friends and myself with a couple of shepherds were walking the tableland on the top of the mountain, trying, I fear in vain, to pick up a brace or two of grouse; when an old cock rose fairly near the right-hand gun, a woodcock in front of the middle gun, and a vixen fox, who moved leisurely off through the heather, just in front of myself. I forgot what happened to the first two, but from the shepherd close to me came these somewhat incomprehensible words: 'What, back again? This is the third time.' Now this shepherd was an old friend of mine, a silent man and very hard to draw. After lunch I interviewed him as to the meaning of his strange words. It appeared that this old fox was an annuity to him. Twice during the last season had he secured her in a wych trap and sold her to a keeper not very far away, and twice had she come back safe and sound. Once again he had her at the end of the season and sold her, farther away from her mountain home, but here she was back again, and possibly has been a source of revenue to my friend, and given a gallop or two to a pack whose name I must not divulge.

I must wake up from my dream of long ago, and put my rod together if I am to have a few fish before I turn for home.

There, under the fringe of the elder bushes dipping into the stream, half a dozen fair fish are rising. Can I reach them without being hung up? I will try!

I have lingered a little longer than I thought for. The little grey pony's trot sounds on the road half a mile away, and, for once too soon, a voice I dearly love comes from the bridge: 'Father, are you ready?' All right, turn the pony round!

GROUSE DRIVING

BY THE HON. A. GATHORNE HARDY

ONE of the most remarkable characteristics of the red grouse is the difference in the degree of wildness which it shows in different localities. In some of the islands on the west coast of Scotland it is difficult to make the coveys rise, even late in the season; and it would be possible for persevering and persistent guns to exterminate the breed altogether. On the mainland of Argyllshire, and especially in the south of the peninsula of Cantyre, the grouse are still very tame during the early part of the season, and even late in October will often sit to dogs on a fine day with bright sun and a slight touch of frost. In Perthshire good sport can be had with pointers and setters, although several coveys rise out of range, but later in the season it is next to impossible to approach the birds, except round the corners of hills or in very broken ground, and dogs are rather a hindrance than a help. A single very steady old pointer or setter, or a well-broken spaniel which will keep quite close to hand, will sometimes find a stray bird so unaccountably tame that otherwise it would have escaped notice; but this is the exception which proves the rule. Coming further south to the border country, on the long rolling moors of Eskdale and Teviotdale, the grouse are still wilder, and I have the dogs taken

up and walking in line resorted to, for preference even in the first week in August. In Westmorland the birds are wilder than in Roxburghshire and Berwick, and in many parts of Yorkshire the practice of walking after grouse at all has fallen quite into desuetude—a strange fact the reason of which I cannot explain. It is true, as a rule, that birds are wildest where they are most plentiful, and where the heather is shortest; but I have known them tame on very bare ground and unapproachable in the most luxuriant heather, and it really seems as if the nature of the birds varied in different localities. The practice of driving has its origin, not in the laziness of the modern sportsman, but in the necessity for some method of getting at birds which had really learnt to defy all other modes of pursuit. For this purpose the wildness of the birds is actually an advantage. Fewer beaters are required to put them up and send them forward, and the tame coveys, which alight before facing the line of fire, and run about spying the ground before them with outstretched necks and uplifted heads, are almost certain to penetrate the secret of the most skilful ambush, and to face the waving flags and demonstrative gestures of beaters and flankers in preference to the hidden danger recalled by the glint of a barrel or the motion of a hand. What originated in necessity has been continued from choice, for the sake of its own inherent advantages. Wherever driving has been adopted grouse increased in numbers and in health; as the old cocks found their tactics of getting off in advance of their juvenile relations resulted in their drawing the first fire instead of escaping altogether. Gradually the practice spread, and the inveterate conservatism of keepers has at length, and with difficulty, been induced to tolerate and eventually encourage driving with the best results, in places where for years they asserted that it was impossible and absurd to attempt it.

I do not wish to embark upon the well-worn controversy carried on, not so much between the actual votaries of driving and shooting over dogs as between certain writers masquerading in their names whose works usually betray an equal ignorance of both methods. My tastes are catholic in such matters, and it does not seem necessary to exalt one sport by disparaging another. I should be very sorry to see shooting over dogs altogether done away with, for nothing in my eyes is more beautiful than to see a pair of well-trained pointers or setters ranging a moor obedient to the least gesture or motion of a *silent* keeper. I would as soon see horses altogether displaced by

puffing and smelling automobiles as lose my opportunity of watching those beautiful examples of instinct and training; but it is not necessary to shut one's eye to the certain obvious advantages of driving, or to declaim entirely against 'armchair' sportsmen. It is idle to deny that a driven grouse presents a much more difficult mark for the gun than a bird rising just when you expect him in the very spot indicated by a point. The 'proof of the pudding is in the eating,' and numbers of men can secure a good bag walking who can hardly kill one bird out of twenty streaming over their heads. It is a real treat to see a first-rate workman crumple up his birds, but it requires long training as well as a quick hand and eye before two guns can be so handled as to enable the owner to secure three or four birds out of a covey. Again, driving is a more sociable form of sport than its rival, and the same ground will provide amusement for a large party. But I love variety; and the ideal moor to my thinking is one where the birds sit well to dogs early in the season, and the drivers get their turn later on.

For a detailed and scientific description of all the best ways and means of carrying on a drive successfully, I must refer my readers to the admirable articles by Lord Granby, published in the BADMINTON; and to the well-known treatise of Mr. Archibald Stuart Wortley on 'Grouse' in the 'Fur, Feather, and Fin' series. Both are past masters of the art upon which they write, and are as skilful with the pen as with the double barrel. A keeper who can manage a drive well is a treasure. He requires the qualities of a general commanding an army in the field. Temper, patience, and influence over men as well as an accuracy of observation and instinctive knowledge of the habits of birds and animals. The conformation of the ground and the currents of the wind should also be thoroughly noted, and, given a combination of knowledge and these attributes, there is hardly any place where I should pronounce successful driving to be impossible. The position of the butts must of course be determined by the trend of the moor; but they should be placed in as straight a line as possible, and so concealed from the front by rising ground that the guns can get into their places, having approached them unseen. The rising ground should, however, not be too near; as it is next to impossible to shoot well if you are unable to see your birds until they are close upon you. This combination of advantages cannot, however, be obtained in all instances, and one at least of the guns has to put up with very difficult shots, but is often compensated for his disadvantage in that respect by

getting more birds over him than those who are favoured with a more distant horizon. The sides of the butts should be sufficiently high to screen the occupant from chance pellets, but this again is not always possible, and great care should be exercised not to fire along the line. This may sound like an unnecessary warning, or one, at all events, that should only be addressed to tailors and tiros; but my experience shows that it needs to be hammered in by constant repetition. I have seen good and careful sportsmen, new to grouse driving, fire dangerous shots, and have had difficulty afterwards in persuading them of the truth of the impeachment. The fact is that they believed that they were firing well in front, and did not allow for the swing of the gun in following the bird at an obtuse angle to the right or left. The safe rule is only to shoot birds either well in front or behind, and never under any circumstances to follow the pack with the barrels right round a semicircle. Different treatment is meted out to delinquents by different people; I remember one sufferer whom I found bleeding from a wound in the nose at the end of a drive, who entreated me to say nothing about it, as he was sure his next-door neighbour would be dreadfully unhappy if he knew he had hit him; and another less indulgent who placed a careless sportsman in a gravel pit for the remainder of the day, patiently expecting the grouse which were being driven in quite a different direction.

The careful placing of flankers is even of more importance than the regulation of the drivers themselves. A pack is readily turned by a concealed flag-bearer rising at the right moment, the element of surprise and suddenness being more important for the purpose of alarming wild creatures than any obtrusive and noisy demonstrations. The drivers themselves should advance in a good military line, and at an even pace, holding their flags in an upright position. They should preserve silence, and not trouble themselves to shout and wave their flags at birds flying back. Such tactics only very occasionally turn a covey which has made up its mind to 'face the music,' and are decidedly detrimental to the general success of the drive. I have often contrasted the mechanical advance of a well-drilled team, say in Yorkshire or the Lowlands, with the antics of the scratch pack who are pressed together for an occasional drive in Argyllshire. The latter is very amusing, but it is not the real article. The line is erratic, and the moment a covey rises all the beaters stand still waving flags and shouting 'Mark!' until they are out of sight. As a consequence the birds a long way ahead become

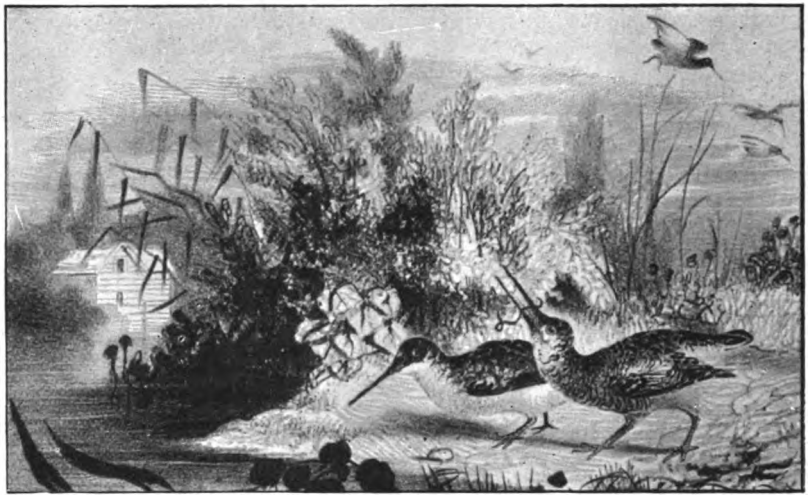
on the alert, and often have grasped the fact that a drive is going on in time to give mature consideration to their safest line of flight. Probably, however, if your sense of humour is keen, you may derive so much amusement from the performance of your ill-disciplined assistants, as will compensate you for the loss of a certain amount of sport.

It is well to be prepared for all weathers, more especially for extremes of cold and heat. A good warm cape, which can be easily thrown off when the birds begin to come, is an almost indispensable requisite; and a good tweed is preferable to a waterproof—it will turn almost as much wet. It is a risky thing to sit facing a bleak north-easter or a West Highland shower in thin garments, after you have heated yourself with a climb, often long and severe, to get from one set of butts to another. I think I have been colder out driving than when pursuing any other form of sport. Spring fishing on the Tay or waiting for the mist to clear in an exposed place in a deer forest are chilly proceedings, but a snow-storm in November, accompanied by a cold squall, is a very effective method of reducing the temperature. One sportsman, now a member of Parliament, was guilty of the heinous crime of lighting a fire in his butt and going to sleep, thus letting the grouse stream over his head uninjured; and extenuating circumstances may at least be pleaded in mitigation of his sentence. I have started out grouse driving on worse days than I have ever faced any other form of shooting. It is difficult to say No when a drive has been planned long beforehand, and guns and beaters collected from a distance, especially when the end of the season is approaching and it must be now or never. The best way is to be prepared to face all contingencies, and remember that often a very bad morning ripens out into a bright day, while determined bad weather may follow on the most glorious sunrise. It is not like covert shooting, where a really wet morning is fatal to sport, as the undergrowth will be dripping and the birds draggled, even if the weather clears soon after the start; while grouse soon recover the effects of the heaviest showers, and rise more easily and fly farther after some hours of storm. The views, too, after the air has cleared, are often magnificent, and as I write I can recall glorious views of Ailsa Craig and Arran from the rolling hills of Ayrshire, on the mist clearing from the high hills around Millden or Invernark.

An improvised drive, when birds have turned out too wild to walk, or a lot of old blackcocks or grouse have been spied on a hill-side stubble or a green brae on the edge of a moor is also very

A SNOWSTORM IN NOVEMBER

amusing. It is a real triumph to circumvent the former—wily old stagers with lyre-shaped tails and glossy plumage, which always rise well out of shot unless stalked or driven. How the heart beats as one cautiously crawls round under peat hag or dyke, and what excitement one has for a too brief quarter of an hour or twenty minutes, from the first peep when one finds that one has gained one's ambush unperceived! Next uplifted heads and excited movements show that the birds have detected the advance of the keepers and gillies before you can see either of them, and then all take to flight, perhaps disappointing you by going right away to the right or left, but sometimes coming straight over you, and leaving two of their number dead before and behind. Such a shot is worth a dozen on a set day, for you feel that you have pitted your own instinct and experience against that of those sagacious creatures, and come off the conqueror.



NOTES

BY 'RAPIER'

So far as can be judged, Forfarshire seems to be the best of the two-year-olds this season, for the manner in which he won the Imperial Stakes at Kempton Park was certainly brilliant in the extreme. There is no doubt as to S. Loates' capacity as a horseman, but he seems to have singularly bad luck in the important two-year-old races he rides. Cyllene ought to have won without the least difficulty at Sandown Park on the occasion when he only beat Ebba by the shortest of short heads, though Loates did get through in the last three strides and freed himself from the bad luck at the finish. He was less fortunate when Democrat beat Forfarshire, also at Sandown; and in this case there was a real excuse for the second. It is now evident that Forfarshire ought to have won, for then he had 9 lbs. the best of the weights; he was irretrievably shut in here, and till close on the post at Kempton it looked as if the Imperial Stakes was to be a repetition of the Sandown disaster. It appeared impossible for Loates to get through, but in the very nick of time he wisely made up his mind to pull round a couple of horses which were in front of him, and was just able to win. Another

second's hesitation would have lost him the race, and the extraordinary speed with which Forfarshire came out when he had a clear course before him proved that the colt must be very nearly, if not quite, all that his friends say. He was reported to be 10 lbs. better than Perthshire—an extraordinarily high trial for a two-year-old.

Of course the question arises as to Forfarshire's chance in the Derby next year. To all appearance the field will be small and not remarkable for quality. Glancing down the list of entries one pauses at Bonarosa, who was at one time believed to be a good colt; and though he had done so very little to justify this opinion since his first race, it is, of course, not impossible that he may recover his form. Even that, however, would probably leave him a long way from the front rank. The winner of the July Stakes is usually worth consideration. Captain Kettle has speed, but it is to be feared he does not stay—his running in the Middle Park Plate rather suggested this—notwithstanding that a son of Buccaneer ought to do so. It would not surprise me if we have seen the best of Democrat this year. Many persons are strongly inclined to believe that there is not much room for improvement in him. Diamond Jubilee must always be an exceedingly uncertain quantity. Kerseymere, once believed to be in the first class, has apparently fallen upon evil days, and has been absent from exercise for a perilously long time. Mahdi, on his first appearance, showed himself about 10 lbs. behind Democrat, and that is a good deal of leeway to make up; but he does seem an improving sort, and might be a more than useful three-year-old. Simon Dale quite discounted his chances in the Middle Park Plate. After that it is impossible to believe in him, the more so as there is the hill at Epsom to descend, he is certainly upright, and has by no means the best of joints. Goblet is better than he, and Elopement better than Goblet, but neither, unfortunately for their owners, is in the Derby. My present fancy, however, is decidedly for Forfarshire.

With 'Races to Come' before me, I naturally glance at the Oaks, knowing perfectly well all the time that nothing can by any possibility be more misleading than such a survey; for the reason that the form of a two-year-old filly as often as not—or I

should rather say oftener than not—is no guide to what her three-year-old form is likely to be. So far as one can tell at present, a good many mares seem to have a chance in the Oaks. Atbara, Dum-Dum, Dusky Queen, Edith Crag, Greenaway, Vain Duchess, Merry Gal—I suppose there is a temptation to name daughters of Galopin in this way, but it is not particularly elegant—Paigle, Tiresome, Winifreda and Vane have all shown form which renders their success at Epsom within the bounds of probability. We shall, however, really know very little about Oaks prospects until close on the eve of the One Thousand, and then are not unlikely to judge wrongly.

At the time of writing, it looks as if S. Loates would head the list of winning jockeys, for he is riding in excellent form, and Madden, who headed the list last year, has not been greatly distinguishing himself recently. When we talk of heading the list, however, a misconception is likely to arise. The point is not so much the actual number of winners as the average of success, and both Loates and Madden have ridden literally hundreds more races than Mornington Cannon, who at present comes third. He has gained his usual proportion of victories, roughly speaking, two in seven; and some disadvantage always attaches to jockeys who can only ride top weights. Personally I must confess that I cannot grow reconciled to the American system of sitting on a horse's withers and leaning over his neck, but there is no gainsaying the fact that the averages of the American jockeys Sloan, J. H. Martin and the Rieffs are remarkably good. They have, it is true, had exceptional luck in riding for stables which have been in strikingly good form, and when not employed by those who have the first call on their services, they never get up on a horse that is not thought to have something more than merely a good chance. We used to see in the case of Fred Archer what results could be obtained by jockeys who are able to pick their mounts, and this is again perceptible, but nevertheless there is no getting away from their good averages. That they often ride very bad finishes is nevertheless unquestionable.

I have never wished to see a Bull Fight, the business being diametrically opposed to all my ideas of sport, for the bull has no

sort of chance. The animals and birds which we pursue in England have their speed or cunning to help them in emergencies, but the wretched bull is taken into the arena to be first tortured and finally killed; and in addition to this there is the barbarous cruelty to the miserable horses. In South America, I am told, a bull fight is less abominable, as there an important detail of sport—if the last word may be so degraded—is to save the horses from any injury, and if one accidentally does get hurt the rider is vigorously hooted; but I confess I should like to have seen the 'fight' in Paris on the 8th of last month. There, at any rate, for a time the bull had all the best of it, and turned the tables in really magnificent fashion on those who had assembled to see him tormented. They learnt for one thing that a bull is an excellent jumper. This one cleared the barrier, said to have been close on five feet high, crashed through the second fence and took his place amongst the spectators. For these it is impossible to feel any sort of sympathy, and it is pleasant to think that for the next few minutes the bull had quite a good time while they had not. He conferred rich benefit on a number of, I hope, deserving tailors, dressmakers, milliners, and other tradespeople, and at least one bootmaker has also derived good from the show, for the correspondent of the *Standard* relates how he picked up a lady's shoe. The scene was, in fact, vastly more exciting than those who had paid their money to see it can possibly have expected. Ultimately, of course, the poor beast had to pay for his frolic. Forty-three bullets were fired into him, and when he was dead, one of the Matadors gallantly drew his sword and plunged it into the good bull's body. I imagine that there will be no great competition for front seats next time if the authorities allow any more 'fights.'

It will be noticed in Lord Granby's article on 'The Pheasant,' elsewhere in this number, that he considers that creature 'perhaps the most difficult of all our game birds to shoot, at any rate when properly "put over" the guns.' Few men have shot more, and at the same time have pursued the sport with more intelligent observation, than Lord Granby; but difficult as it is to bowl over a rocketer coming down wind and high up, I am not sure that I should have set him down as the hardest of all shots! It is curious that some men who are very good at pheasants are indifferent hands at driven partridges, and *vice versâ*. It cannot

be too strongly impressed upon a moderate shot that his failures usually result from the fact that he does not hold sufficiently far forward, and, as Lord Granby implies, men who miss pheasants when they are well put over the guns do so because they probably fail to realise the speed at which the birds are travelling. That is why a low skimming pheasant, who progresses without moving his wings, is so often missed. Men do not understand what a lot of 'way' he has on him. I should have been inclined to say—though my experience is far less than that of the writer of the article—that driven partridges under certain conditions were harder to kill than pheasants well up; but I may be only drawing on my own shortcomings in this respect. One generally, at any rate, gets a better view of a pheasant than of a partridge. Very often, crouching behind a hedge, one cannot well make out precisely how the birds are coming. More difficult still is good practice when one stands in a road between two high hedges, and can only get at the birds as they come over. Nervous apprehension that you will not have a chance at them often causes you to miss. I have never thought that a woodcock is such a difficult bird to kill as is generally represented. His flight is extremely dodgy, of course. You cannot allow for what he is going to do; all the same, if you get him well in sight, one of your two barrels ought usually to account for him, though not seldom one sees him pass a line of fair average shots and fly away unharmed. I have noticed that men who are very good at partridges, pheasants, and ground game often expend a great many unproductive cartridges at duck. That I take to be because, as a rule, the average shooter gets fewer chances at duck than at the other birds, they are often exceedingly high up, for one thing, and for another, one miscalculates their speed.

Yacht-racing, picturesque and exciting as it is under favourable conditions, is very tedious business when the yachts do not race but only drift, and at the time of writing interest in the America Cup seems to be evaporating after some half-dozen abortive attempts to bring off the struggle. It is gratifying to know that this time no fault has been found with the keeping of the course, and the race could have been brought to a satisfactory conclusion if only there had been a little wind to help on the competitors. The papers devote much space to the subject, and I hear that crowds on the Embankment assemble to see details of the race projected

on a building there to such an extent that the throng obstruct the traffic. I fancy, however, that this is rather the attraction of a novel device than real interest in the America Cup. At clubs and other places where I meet people I have heard very little about this race. The truth is that Sir Thomas Lipton has never been known as a yachting man, and a suspicion prevails that the affair is not so exclusively designed to further the interests of sport as to serve as an advertisement for the company which Sir Thomas Lipton is about to start in America.

Mr. W. J. Ford writes to me :—'Dear Rapier,—In a paper of mine on cricket phraseology, published in the BADMINTON of September, I quoted a passage from "Tom Brown's School-days," as the *locus classicus* for the phrase "slow cobs." Mr. Anthony Deane, another of your contributors, thereupon wrote to me that his edition reads "slow lobs." This led to a little investigation both on his part and mine to see what the true reading is. Even in the British Museum I could not get a copy of the original edition, but here are our joint results tabulated :

'Third edition, 1857, reads "slow cobs."

'"Collection of British Authors" (Tauchnitz), 1858, reads "slow cobs."

'"Golden Treasury series," 1868, reads "slow cobs."

'New edition, 1869, reads "*small* cobs."

'New edition, 1871, reads "slow cobs."

'Popular edition, 1873, reads "slow cobs."

'Ordinary edition, 1879, reads "slow *lobs*."

'Ordinary edition, 1889, reads "*small* cobs."

'Sixth edition, 1890, reads "small cobs."

'The edition of 1896 reads "small cobs."

'This is really quite a curious collection of readings, worthy of a Bentley, a Porson, or a Jebb. The word "small," it will be seen, creeps into the 1869 edition, only to be ousted for twenty years, when it reappears. "Lobs" only appears once – perhaps a cricketer read the proofs—but "cobs" is the accepted phrase. "Cob" may originally have been the error of a printer, made when cricket was not so universal as it now is; but it would be interesting to hear from some bibliophile what the reading is in the original edition, as we cannot, alas! consult the author. Also it would be good if any past-time cricketer could tell us if

"cob" was ever an accepted phrase. Unless a printer's error is suspected—and "c" and "l" might easily be confounded—the general principles of textual criticism would establish the claim of the unusual word "cob" over the ordinary word "lob," assuming that "cob" was not a technical term. "Small" looks like the editing of a horsey "reader." I looked into a French version, hoping for light, but found that it "would require the pen of a Homer to recount the deeds of the heroes," which were consequently left unsung. I don't know the French for a "cob," but *petits chevaux* would have been a delightful find. Excuse my prolixity, but the point seems interesting.'

From Auckland, New Zealand, Mr. Charles Purchas writes: 'Dear Rapier,—I notice in a recent number of your well-known Magazine, in an article on "Polo," that you do honour to this colony by reproducing a photograph of an Auckland polo pony called "Chance It." Unfortunately, you have ascribed the ownership of the pony to the wrong person. You call him "Mr. E. D. O'Rorke's" pony. As a matter of fact, Mr. O'Rorke never owned him. He is my own property and never since he became a polo pony has he belonged to anyone else. He has never started in polo races except in my nomination. As "Chance It" has been favoured with a place in the BADMINTON I shall feel it a personal honour to have my name inserted as the owner, instead of Mr. O'Rorke's, and ask you to make the correction before you have this year's volume bound. Mr. O'Rorke received a photograph of the pony from me before he left here on a visit to England, and no doubt the error has occurred through his not being sufficiently explicit when sending the picture to your office. Permit me to say that your articles on Polo &c. are much appreciated in this far-off colony, and that many of us who have learnt the game here have benefited greatly by your hints to players. Your Magazine has hosts of readers in New Zealand.'

THE
BADMINTON MAGAZINE
December 1899

THE FATE OF GEOFFREY DEANE

BY HORACE G. HUTCHINSON

THERE are days in the Western Highlands when even the native crofter, semi-amphibious creature that he is, is not able to go about his ordinary avocations—days on which the rain, no longer falling with that soft but perpetual insistence which makes up nine-tenths of West Highland weather, drives across the saddened heather in sheets and splashes. Such rain wets you to the skin in five minutes. Under such conditions the bare and purely utilitarian aspect of the normal shooting lodge becomes aggravated to such a degree that the sight of it afar off fills one with a sense of the abomination of desolation.

Of this not very exhilarating character was the outward aspect of the shooting lodge of Loch Kinloch on a September day of 1898. It was a small house 'with two reception rooms,' according to the shooting agent's description, but not adapted for the reception of a large number of guests. Yet the two so-called reception rooms fulfilled adequately enough the functions of drawing- and dining-room respectively for the small and select party assembled in the house—a party composed of host and hostess and three bachelor guests. Besides the out-buildings, offices, dog-kennels, and the rest of the 'amenities'—still to speak in terms of the house-agent's catalogue—appropriate and essential to every shooting lodge. that of Loch Kinloch was

fortunate in having a gun-room of unusual size and some pretensions to comfort; and it was in this room, used on wet days and byedays as a smoking-room, that all the members of the small shooting party were assembled on this hopelessly wet September afternoon.

The grouse-shooting had been but moderate; the burns, even in this weeping western climate, had been very low, so that the sea-trout, leaping in the loch in search of fresh water, could not ascend them. The present aspect of the heavens gave good hope for the future, but both bright future and unprofitable past had been discussed during luncheon; and during the smoking of the after-luncheon pipe the little party seemed disposed to a moody silence, in sympathy with the gloomy weather out of doors. The hostess, a young and pretty woman of some twenty-five years of age, was sedulously at work on a pair of knickerbocker stockings with elaborate tops. Her husband—fair, clean-shaven save for a slight moustache, scarcely older-looking than herself—gazed gloomily through the smoke-wreaths curling from his pipe at the dismal landscape without. A second young man, of rather similar aspect, absently caressed the head of a curly-coated retriever that sat beside his chair and blinked at the peat fire. A man considerably older than any of the three, with a tall slight figure, thin aquiline face, and iron-grey beard closely trimmed to a point, occasionally moved a step or two to examine more closely, but with a languid interest, the guns and roe-deer's heads ranged against the wall. And the fifth member of the party, needing no particular description, was the narrator —at second hand—of the present story.

The dog that the young man before the fire had been caressing yawned and stretched itself at length on the floor. As if this action on the part of his canine friend had brought the young man's meditation to a point, he said abruptly: 'Fred, could you come and shoot coverts with me, 2nd of November?'

'Thanks. So far as I know, I shall be delighted.'

It was the older man, he of the close-trimmed, iron-grey beard, who had been examining the guns and trophies, that answered him. A stranger might have felt a momentary surprise at the use of the Christian name addressed to a man so much older than the speaker; but a glance at the well-fitting, well-cut shooting clothes, and the general aspect of smartness and youngmannishness, so to speak, of this man of fully middle age, might have told a close observer that he was one of those who would appreciate from younger men the style of address that passes

current with contemporaries. In fact, Fred Mortimer, a diplomat by profession, who had served as Minister at one or two Legations, but had left the service before reaching the rank of ambassador, affected the society of younger men, was a member of those clubs to which younger men resort, and prided himself on still belonging, by his tastes and interests, to a generation younger than that to which his age would relegate him. Without any foolish affectation of youthfulness he liked young men, and was pleased that they should regard him as a friend and a participator in their interests. And in point of fact they found him a good and sympathetic friend, and liked him well.

'Who are your party?' Fred Mortimer asked.

'Jim,' answered the other, with a nod towards the host; 'Mrs. Jim, if she will honour us; Edward Carr, and one or two others —I forget now. Oh, yes—and "Dapper" Deane.'

'"Dapper" Deane!' Mortimer repeated, quietly removing the cigarette from his mouth and blowing out a long stream of smoke. 'I am very sorry, Georgie. You must not mind—we know one another too well for that—I am afraid I cannot come. I have made it a rule not to shoot with "Dapper" Deane.'

These few words, quietly spoken, dissipated in an instant the slight sense of boredom that seemed to have every member of the party in its possession. A look of surprise and interrogation was expressed on every face upturned towards the diplomat.

'But,' said George Denison, whom the other had addressed as 'Georgie,' '"Dapper" Deane is a good shot. You don't think him dangerous?'

'I know he is a good shot,' said Mortimer, with a short laugh. 'That is why I think him dangerous.'

'What do you mean, Fred? You——'

'Yes,' said Mortimer, 'it is quite true. I have said too much not to say more.' He glanced at each member of the party in turn. 'Yes,' he went on, 'I think you are all to be trusted. It is a wet afternoon. Shall I tell you a story?'

He seated himself in a wooden elbow chair before the fire, and threw away the stump of his cigarette.

'You remember Geoffrey Deane, the younger brother, no doubt?' he began.

'The young fellow who was drowned,' said Denison; 'yes.'

'Just so,' Mortimer answered. 'He was drowned, as you say, just four years ago now. He had been ploughed for the Diplomatic Service, and after his last shot had missed he came up to stay with us at the lodge at Kingowrie—the little place in

Forfarshire, you know, that belongs to the "young laird," as we call him, my nephew, and at that time my ward.

'You know what a good-looking fellow "Dapper" Deane is. "The best-looking man in London," I believe, is his general description; but there are always some half-dozen or so at least of these "best-looking men in London." At any rate he is as good-looking a fellow as you can well conceive, and upon my word I think young Geoffrey at the time he came up to us was really better-looking, with all the same charm and grace of manner, and he had not got that hard expression which even then "Dapper" Deane had. It has quite spoilt the beauty of his face, to my thinking, now. The fact that Geoffrey had been ploughed in his exam., that life presented no imaginable career to him, that he was utterly impecunious and without prospects, as all the Deanes always have been and always will be—all this did not seem to weigh on his spirits in the slightest degree. He was altogether as charming a young fellow as it is possible to conceive.

'The shooting that marched with ours, Ravenscrag, had been taken that year by some very rich manufacturing people, by name Faber. The lessee was quite a young fellow; indeed, he had been at Oxford with my nephew, the young laird; and though some of us in that part of the world had old-fashioned ideas at that time about "trade" and so forth, we were content to take the young laird's word for it that Faber was a real good fellow; and indeed it was the young laird who had first put into his head the idea of taking this shooting. So we looked forward to making his better acquaintance, and it was not until they had actually come into residence at Ravenscrag that we discovered the not really very extraordinary, but under the circumstances rather significant fact that young Faber had a sister.

'Here the story begins to have an interest for you, Mrs. Jim,' said Fred Mortimer, turning with a smile to the hostess. 'That which made the fact of his having a sister—and an only sister—significant, was that until the very day of their coming to Ravenscrag the young laird had said never a word about her existence. He might, of course, quite conceivably have been ignorant of it. As a matter of fact, however, he knew it singularly well. It was very evident on the occasion of our first call at Ravenscrag that Miss Faber and the young laird did not meet as strangers, and on the way home he said something to me, in a most studiously careless way, about having met her at "Commemoration"—an Oxford name for dances, as far as I understand it.

'We soon became intimate with the Ravenscrag party, and shot together several times. Faber was a very healthy specimen of the young British athlete, and Miss Faber charmed us all. The young laird was wise enough to let the young lady make her favourable impression on us before so far committing himself to me, as his guardian, as to confess that there was "something" between them—"something in the nature of an understanding—not exactly an engagement, don't you know, Uncle Fred?" That was his perspicuous way of putting it.

'Now I do not know whether you know my nephew—ah yes, you do, Georgie. You must know him, then, for the most simple-minded, true-hearted, muddle-headed, bashful, red-haired young Scotchman that was ever made. Just the sort of person that in diplomacy we should wish diplomats—other diplomats—to be made of. Only, unfortunately, they do not make diplomats of people like the young laird. Diplomacy and he are as far apart as the poles. His faculties do not lie in that line. Is that the same, Mrs. Jim, as to say that he has no faculty for making love?'

'Will you kindly go on with your story, Mr. Mortimer?'

'It is certain, at all events, that he did not manage his affairs well. An "understanding which is not an engagement" is the kind of thing that may mean so much more to the one party to it than to the other—you may have noticed that in our dealings with Russia. The young laird may have understood the "understanding" in a different sense from the young lady. That does happen, you know, Mrs. Jim. And it was just when matters were in this stage of negotiation—the treaty unsigned—that Geoffrey Deane came to the lodge. He, it is true, had been ploughed for the Diplomatic Service, but he had the diplomatic faculty nevertheless, which Nature had not given the young laird. He too, as it appeared, had met Miss Faber at Commemoration. He too, as it appeared, was under the charm; but he gave expression to his sentiments, I have no doubt, very differently—very much more diplomatically—than the young laird.

'Diplomacy, my dear Mrs. Jim,' said the narrator, 'consists a good deal in the playing-off of one party against another. I am therefore quite convinced that there must be some kinship between the faculties for successful diplomacy and the successful making of love. Geoffrey Deane's diplomacy had its obvious successes. The lady appeared increasingly more distant to the young laird, to that red-headed young Scotchman's increasing distress. But at the same time she did not transfer her favours altogether.

She dallied—in a word, she was diplomatic. On the other side the diplomatic advantage was with Geoffrey Deane, but the advantage of the bigger battalions was all in favour of the young laird. Never,' said Mortimer, changing his tone of badinage for one of gravity, 'never was there a more honest, true-hearted, better fellow in the world than the young laird. And he had a position, a small estate—small, but sufficient to put him above all suspicion of fortune-hunting. Whereas young Geoffrey Deane—agreeable, handsome, and all the rest of it—had nothing, not a penny, and the character of his precious brother "Dapper" Deane to handicap him.

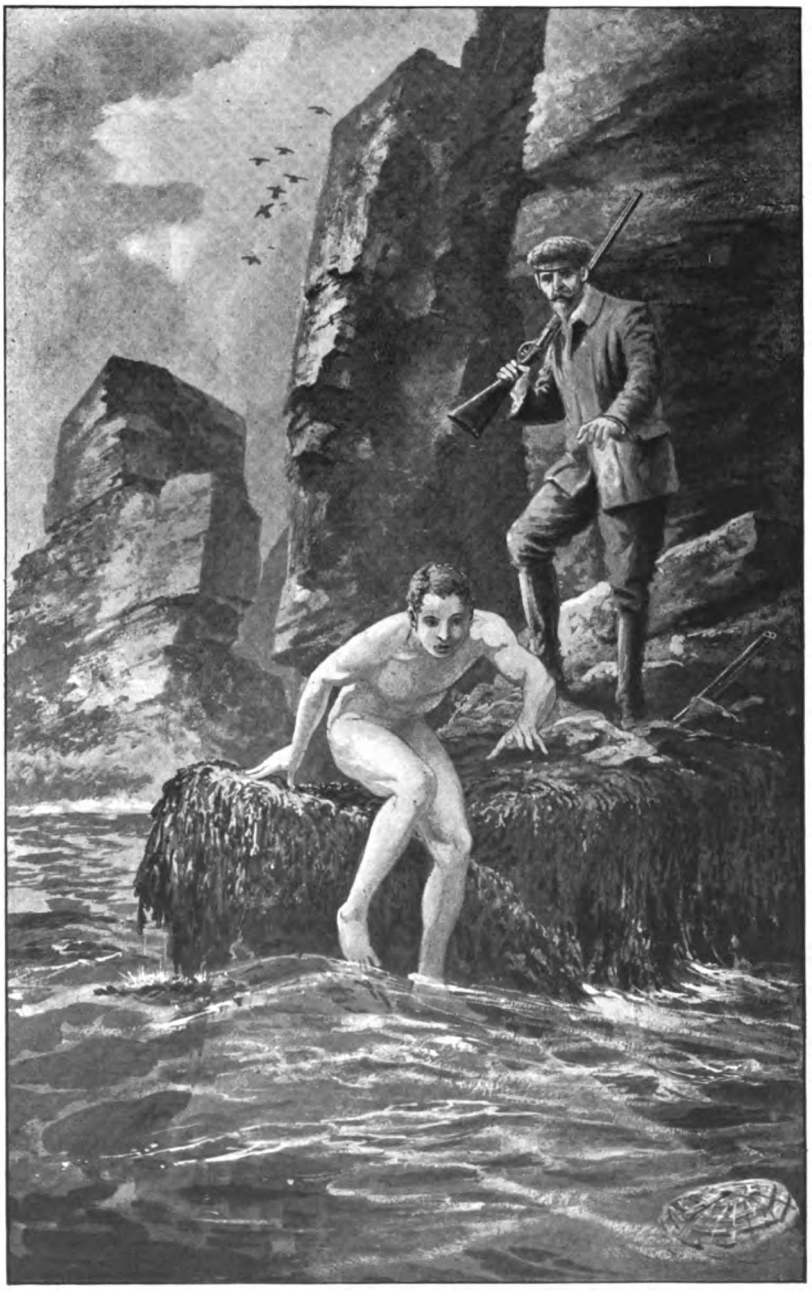
'That was an unfair handicap, I admit. It was unfair to visit the sins of the elder brother upon the younger, but it was impossible to forget that "Dapper" Deane had at one time been just the same charming, good-looking, utterly unprincipled young fellow as Geoffrey Deane was then; only that the latter's lack of principle had not matured into a system of living off the winnings of younger men at cards and the like pleasant practices—I am speaking in confidence, be it understood, please—which form the present stock in trade of "Dapper" Deane.'

'Oh, *de mortuis*, you know, my dear Fred,' Denison interrupted in expostulation. 'It is not very fair to visit on the head of a young fellow cut off as Geoffrey Deane was, the sins that he might have committed on his brother's example.'

'Yes, thank you, Georgie,' Fred Mortimer replied drily, 'I know enough Latin to remember that quotation. Will you wait till I have finished the story, please?

'The position being as I have described it, Geoffrey Deane, having done his visit to us, went on to stay a week or so at Ravenscrag. It was the most natural proceeding in the world, but it did not tend in any way to the increased happiness of the young laird. He became more and more dismal and moody, and inclined to lose his appetite—which was a terribly bad sign with him.

'The lady, when he met her, treated him with ever-growing coldness, and seemed, on the contrary, on such very excellent terms with Geoffrey Deane that I was constantly fearing to hear the announcement of an engagement, or of "some kind of understanding which was not an engagement," between Miss Faber and young Deane, which would drive our young laird to who could say what depths of desperation. The guests, Geoffrey Deane excepted, had left Ravenscrag. It was getting late on in September, but perfect weather; and we were asked to join Faber



IN TWO MINUTES HE HAD HIS CLOTHES OFF AND WAS IN THE SEA

and Geoffrey Deane—it was the latter's last day, the note of invitation mentioned—in a rock-pigeon shoot.'

'That was the day that Geoffrey Deane was drowned?' Denison asked.

'I will tell you,' said Mortimer. 'We went over to Ravenscrag to luncheon. Miss Faber was not there. An old Miss Faber—an aunt that kept house for them—explained that she had a headache. Geoffrey Deane looked as if he, too, had a headache. He had little to say, and when he did talk talked at random, feverishly. After luncheon we set out. Geoffrey Deane and I were to walk along the rocks, below the cliffs, where the caves of the pigeons were; Faber and the young laird above, to shoot the birds that we sent up. Geoffrey Deane and the young laird were to start from a point northward and work south, while we went northward to meet them. I had a boy to carry my cartridges and the pigeons. The Ravenscrag keeper went with Faber. We shot some pigeons, missed some pigeons, and so we worked along till we came to a point where the cliffs jut out and go sheer down, even at low water, to the sea. Beyond this point I expected to see Geoffrey Deane making his way towards me.

'I have said "sheer down,"' Mortimer repeated, while the little party hung upon his words with a feeling that the catastrophe of the story was at hand, 'but that is not to say that there was any difficulty in getting round the point. With ordinary care—it was not climbing, but merely walking—one ran no risk whatever. Just as I rounded the point and expected to see Geoffrey Deane coming along the rock field towards me, my eye was caught by something gleaming at my feet in the sunshine. It was a gun lodged in a crevice of the rock.'

'Geoffrey Deane's gun!' Denison ejaculated.

'Geoffrey Deane's gun,' Mortimer repeated, 'and at a short distance from the rocks, floating on the sea, was his cap, of a big check pattern that there was no mistaking. It was a catastrophe that jumped to the eyes. I asked the boy who was with me whether he could swim. In two minutes he had his clothes off and was in the sea. He reached the cap, but had a hard fight back to the rock by reason of the undertow, which we took to explain later how it was that all our searching failed to find the body. We concluded it had been swept out to sea.'

'It never was recovered; I remember that,' said Denison.

'It never was recovered,' the narrator said. 'We returned to the house in sad procession to tell the news. In the dark avenue

leading to the gates we met, as ill-luck would have it, Miss Faber, apparently recovered of her headache. Before we could say a word to her she exclaimed, after a glance at our party, "He is not here?"

'"He?" I asked, for they seemed to expect me, perhaps as the oldest, to be spokesman.

'"Mr. Deane!"

'"No," I said, "he is not here. There has been an accident——" and before I could even hint to her its nature the colour went from her face, and she would have fallen had her brother not caught her.

'For the moment,' Mortimer continued, 'there seemed nothing very remarkable in that. It was merely natural—if she were attached, as I supposed her to be, to the young man—that she should be greatly moved at the news of the accident that had left none of us unaffected. And subsequently we were so occupied, with the wretched business of the Procurator Fiscal and all the legal formalities and the search for the young fellow's body and so forth, that I had no leisure of mind to think of anything else. But when all that interminable work was over, and one could set one's thoughts in order, I did begin to wonder whether there were not something singular in the lady's way of asking the question, "He is not here?" before a word had been said. Why should he not be absent? There were a thousand trivial things that might have detained him. I felt there was a chapter in the story that was escaping me, and could not fill it in satisfactorily. But in a week or two everything settled down again, as it does after a crisis, and we went on in our old humdrum way just as before.'

'But what,' said Denison, who was growing impatient—'what has all this to do with "Dapper" Deane and your not wanting to shoot with him?'

'Don't be in a hurry, please. It all has something to do with that, as you shall see. It was in September, towards the end of September, that we had our unlucky day after the pigeons. Naturally, amongst my other speculations on the matter, I had often asked myself how this unfortunate business with Geoffrey Deane was to affect our young laird and his suit of Miss Faber. Week after week passed, and his spirits showed no sign of improvement. He saw Faber and his sister rather more constantly, if anything, than before, for we often had to be at Ravenscrag about the legal business, to give evidence before the Crown officials, and so on; but between Miss Faber and the young laird I could

see no change whatever in the position. And you know, Mrs. Jim—I appeal to you,' he said, 'as the one to speak with authority on the subject—you know there *ought* to have been a change, according to my judgment of woman's nature. Either she was genuinely attached to Geoffrey Deane—in which case his tragic death could not fail to make her utterly cold and indifferent towards the young laird – or else she did *not* care for him—and in that case, after the first shock, the fact that he was out of the way would, as I argued, leave the young laird the sole object of her interest. But it was not so. In neither direction did the situation seem to be affected—it was as unsatisfactory and as undefined as ever.

'"And your understanding, which is not an engagement, with Miss Faber," I said one day to the young laird, determined to get a ray of light thrown on the scene, "tell me, how does that promise?"

'"It doesn't promise," he said sulkily.

'"You mean that it is no nearer an engagement than before?"

'"No nearer."

'"And no further from it?"

'"No further, I think. Just the same."

'"And you have not pressed the young lady to make it more definite?"

'"I have tried, yes; but she won't say anything—practically."

'He was very glum. Young Scotchmen often are. But there is a point beyond which it does not do to try to stir up the glumness even of young Scotchmen, and it seemed to me that I had reached the point. I did not ask the boy any more; but I did something else. I did the last thing that a man with the very slightest training in diplomacy might be expected to do —I interfered with business that did not in the least concern me.

'You see,' said Mortimer, with an air of apology, 'I liked the boy. He is my nephew, and he is a good boy. Very red-headed, very Scotch, very glum, but a heart just in the right place, and I could not bear to see him suffer as he was suffering. There are situations in diplomacy where the most direct methods are the best, and in one of these situations we seemed to be now. In order to learn the truth it appeared to me the best way to take the young lady unawares. In the course of a stroll in the Ravenscrag garden I said to her, *à propos de rien*, "Do you know, Miss Faber, it seems to me that you are not treating our young laird very fairly?" Now what do you think a young lady would have done under the circumstances, Mrs. Jim?'

'I do not know the circumstances—of the girl's affections,' the lady answered.

'Quite so—quite true. Neither did I. But I was quite unprepared for what followed; she burst into tears.'

'That might mean anything—or practically nothing,' said the lady whom they called Mrs. Jim.

'It meant nothing—to me,' Mortimer said, 'until the young lady controlled herself again. Then she explained. Before quitting her on the day of our unfortunate pigeon-shooting Geoffrey Deane had made with her a scene from a melodrama. For days, for weeks, as I had presumed, he had made love to her—violent love. She confessed herself attracted by him, but said that she did not really care for him. You may know the precise meaning of that, Mrs. Jim; for myself, I am only a man. She further confessed, with blushes, that her heart was the young laird's. She was quite open about it, poor girl! I think that she found it a comfort to have someone to confide it all to. And Geoffrey Deane that day had vowed to her that if she would not marry him he would drown himself—an unreal, melodramatic, essentially unmodern proceeding, as it sounded. The only thing that gave the melodrama the look of tragedy was that, as it seemed, he actually had done so.

'So now you have the circumstances about the girl's affections. What, under these circumstances, would follow?'

'Inevitably, I should fancy,' said the lady to whom Mortimer put this question, 'what apparently did follow—that the girl could not think of love for any man for months, for years perhaps—perhaps never.'

'You would make a good diplomat, Mrs. Jim. You have read your book of human nature. It was precisely this state of feeling that the girl confessed to. Naturally I combated her view—pointed out the probability that young Deane had met his death by accident, though it was most improbable. Naturally, too, I did not shake her conviction in the smallest degree. My most impertinent remark to her, however, that had brought the tears, had one result that was of interest; it had cleared the fog in which the situation had been shrouded from me. But in its principal object it had failed entirely; it had not put the situation in any more favourable a light as regarded the prospects of the young laird. So to him I said nothing about the interview. We seemed to have arrived at an *impasse*. Then, as usual, the unexpected happened, and showed us the way out of it by a very widely open door.

'About the middle of November we shot the Ravenscrag coverts. When the last beat was over, the Ravenscrag keeper came to me with an air of mystery, and told me that one of the beaters wished particularly to speak to me. I asked him what the man's business was; but that, he said, the man wished to tell only to me. So I told him to bring the fellow forward. He came, slouching his head—a tall, gipsy-looking fellow, whom I did not know. "What is it?" I asked him.

'"If you please, sir," he said, "there's a young gentleman come to our caravan—a young gentleman that's in trouble, in hiding, and he told me I was to speak to yourself, and tell you he had something most particular to say to you, and would you meet him to-night at nine o'clock, abune the Hanging Brig?"

'"A young gentleman?" I said.

'"The same," he said, "as was with you at the lodge." He came a step nearer, and whispered in my ear, "Mr. Geoffrey Deane."'

At this point in the story the little party in the Loch Kinloch gunroom evinced what a newspaper reporter would have called 'sensation.'

'"Mr. Geoffrey Deane?" I said; "he's drowned."

'"He's no drowned," the fellow retorted with a grin.

'"But why," I asked, "if he is not drowned, as you say, should he have come to you, of all people in the world, to bring him to life again? If he is not drowned, why is he hiding?"

'"He's in trouble," the fellow said again, "and he's come to me because I'm the one that knows he's not drowned, and never was drowned."

'"And how did you know it, may I ask?"

'"I know it," he said, "because I was on the cliff side the day that Mr. Faber and yourself and the others were shooting the pigeons. I was netting the rabbits with ferrets on the cliff side." (The fellow had the impudence to tell me this because he knew that the importance of his news would bear him scatheless for it.) "And I saw Mr. Deane, how he came to the Red Nose" (that is the name they give to the red sandstone cliff that juts out as I told you), "and there he looked round and up, and no one was in sight, though I was watching him, and he set his gun down on the rock, and threw his cap out on the sea, and ran back into the cave's mouth that is beside the Red Nose. I saw that," he said, "and then I saw yourself come and take the gun and call up to the others, and the boy swam out for the cap, and

I waited. And presently, when the evening was coming, and I was thinking of going down to the cave's mouth, someone came out of it. It was Mr. Deane, but he had not the suit of clothes he had when he went in, but a common suit, as it might be mine. And then he began to come up the cliff's side by the goat's path. I had laid the ferrets away, and as he came up I stepped out with 'Good-evening, Mr. Deane,' for I knew him well. Then he told me I should not say I had seen him, and he gave me a sovereign and 'Good-night.'"

'Then,' said Mortimer, 'I was furious with the man. "Do you mean that you knew all the time he was alive and never said anything when all the countryside was searching for his body?" I asked him.

'"No, sir," he said, "I did not, for that same night I was in trouble myself, and am but just come out of it."

'At that he lifted his cap a second, and I saw that his head was cropped. He had been in prison.

'"And I had been out no more than two days when Mr. Deane comes to my van, and he says I must hide him till he can get a chance of speaking to yourself. Two days he has looked for you; but to-day he sent the message that you should meet him above the Hanging Brig."

'"Is that all?" I asked him.

'"Yes, sir," he said, "at nine to-night."'

'But surely you didn't believe the fellow's story?' Denison asked.

Mortimer shrugged his shoulders. 'What would be his object in inventing it? That is the question I kept putting to myself. If not true, at least *ben trovato*. I would go at all events to the Hanging Brig—the swing bridge across the river by the salmon leap. I had a thought that the jail-bird gipsy might mean mischief; but he would hardly forewarn a man, so that he should leave his watch at home, if that was his idea. I went full of faith that I should meet Geoffrey Deane, and desperately full of curiosity besides.

'And meet him I did—under the dark trees within sound of the fall. And in the darkness, to the tune of the falling water, I listened to the strangest story—enjoyed the strangest study of the young men of our times—that mortal man ever listened to. It appeared—and Geoffrey Deane told me the story with the most perfect *sang-froid*, as if it were the most matter-of-fact history in the world—that about a year previously he had found himself dead-broke—"stony," as he phrased it—and had gone to

MEET HIM I DID—UNDER THE DARK TREES WITHIN SOUND OF THE FALL

Dapper, as the fit and natural person, in his distress. And Dapper, it appeared, had coolly proposed to "finance," as he called it, Geoffrey for a year, on certain conditions: namely, that by the end of that year he should either have engaged himself to an heiress—in which event, as soon as the marriage took place, Dapper would recoup himself (with good interest, you may be sure) by exacting payment for an I O U which he made Geoffrey sign for him—or, in case the heiress hunt should prove a failure, should—this is the extraordinary and the really interesting part of the transaction—meet his death (make away with himself—commit suicide, in fact) in a manner that should have the appearance of being accidental. In that case Dapper would, of course, recoup himself by means of an insurance which he had effected on Geoffrey Deane's life.'

When he reached this point in his narrative Mortimer paused for a moment and lit a cigarette, while he listened to the exclamations of horror, and almost of incredulity, with which we could not but receive it.

'Yes,' he resumed, 'it sounds impossible. There are men, however, moving in decent society, members of all the clubs, to whom all things are possible; and of these, Dapper Deane is one. He affords an interesting study in human nature. And the man whom he had induced to assent to these propositions was his own, his younger, brother—scarcely more than a boy. The circumstance, as I was not long in discovering, to which I owed the pleasure of hearing the story from Geoffrey Deane's own lips, was that Dapper had already been to the insurance office to claim his money, which the company had declined to give him, pending more satisfactory assurance of Geoffrey Deane's death. Geoffrey had actually been to London disguised, and had seen his brother, and had now come to me in order to confide to me all the particulars, and honour me by asking for my advice. What, under the circumstances, do you conceive that that advice should have been?'

'There is not a question,' returned George Denison. 'You told him, of course, to return to London, to life, and tell Dapper Deane to go to the deuce.'

'Wait a moment,' said Mortimer; 'that was precisely my own first impulse too. Second thoughts advised me otherwise. I will premise that I was anxious to save Geoffrey, whom I regarded as far more sinned against than sinning. Dapper Deane, you see, had already been to the insurance people. You know the name that this proceeding on the brothers' part would

have in a court of law—"conspiracy to defraud." It has a nasty sound.

'"By Jove!" as Geoffrey Deane remarked in his own manner when I mentioned it to him, "that means 'chokey.' I shouldn't like the skilly, and I'm jolly sure Dapper wouldn't."

'It was difficult therefore to advise him to come to life again and avow himself. But I had no intention of letting Dapper continue to play his nefarious game. On the whole, I was inclined to approve an idea of going to the colonies, which Geoffrey Deane himself mooted. I wrote to Dapper Deane, telling him that I had learned all the circumstances connected with Geoffrey's "death" from the deceased man himself. I proposed to Dapper that as soon as the legal formalities were concluded he should hand to me, for transmission to his brother, the little money held in trust, which would pass from the younger brother to the elder on the supposition of the former's death. Dapper was intelligent enough to understand exactly how the matter stood, and without much demur did as I had courteously asked him. Neither, in spite of probate being granted in regard to his brother's estate, did he make any further claim, as I have been careful to discover, on the insurance office.

'But,' said Mortimer, blowing a cloud of smoke from his cigarette and speaking very quietly, 'Dapper Deane, as you say, is a good shot. To the best of his belief I am the only man in England who can prove his brother to be living. His interest in the silence of that man is obvious. Knowing what I do of him I do not conceive him to be a man to stick at trifles. And that is the reason that I do not care to shoot with Dapper Deane.'

A thoughtful silence possessed the little party in the Loch Kinloch smoking-room. The rain still descended in grey sheets before the windows, but the outlook on life and human nature seemed subtly altered by the story. Mortimer was the only one of the party, perhaps, to whom its telling had not revealed new possibilities. It was the lady who first broke the silence.

'And the girl, Miss Faber?' she asked.

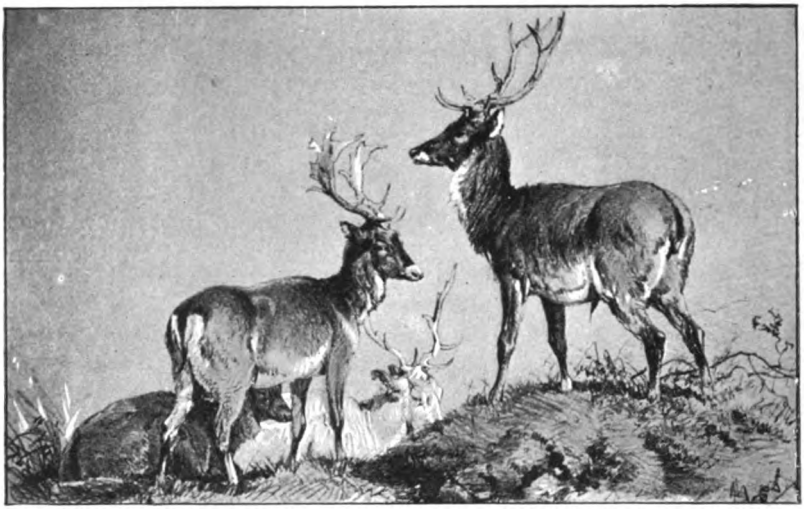
'She married, as you know, the young laird. It struck me that when first I told her the rather comic truth of what had appeared like tragedy on the cliffs on the pigeon-shooting day, her relief at the news was not quite untinged with—what shall we say—disappointment?'

'Disillusionment, rather.'

'Disillusionment, then. It is not easy to relinquish, all at once, the *rôle* of heroine in a tragedy.'

'And Geoffrey Deane—how is he getting on?'

'Well, I should say—though he is not known as "Geoffrey Deane." A friend of mine visited last year the ranch that Geoffrey has a share in. In the semi-obscurity of a cowshed he saw something that he could not clearly distinguish. "What's that?" he asked, uncertain whether it was a man or a calf. "It's the melancholy result," the answer came back, in a voice of great cheerfulness, "of an Eton education." It was a man spreading the bedding with a pick—Geoffrey Deane.'



THE GRAND COUP

BY MAURICE B. BYLES

HAS anyone been lucky enough to bring off the Grand Coup of late years? There is no mention of its having been accomplished to be discovered by the most attentive perusal of the sporting papers. Of course the real Grand Coup is meant, not the ordinary hat trick of grouse, salmon, and stag on the same day—a feat which, as it has been observed, is within reach of anyone having a salmon river on his deer forest. There may naturally be degrees of genuineness in the Grand Coup, just as there are in oysters, where one may have natives at 3*s.*, real natives at 3*s.* 6*d.*, and extra real genuine natives at 4*s.* 6*d.* the dozen. The real Grand Coup *très véritable* should consist of the three most highly prized objects of sport in these islands. Opinions may of course differ as to what these are, but a very good indication may be obtained from listening to the—ahem!—suppose we say 'expressions of regret' on the part of those who have failed. A 'D' of no ordinary magnitude is required to solace the anguish of soul of the wretched man who has missed a stag, and scarcely less emphatic in his denunciations of rod-makers, fly-dressers, Ghillies, rivers, salmon, and things in general, is the luckless wight who has lost a salmon after, say, half an hour's play. Now the only man who at all rivals them in the vigour and

fervency of his remarks is the unfortunate person who, at the very moment when he should have had a double shot at woodcock, has tripped up and fallen on to his nose, or slipped up and fallen—well, not on to his head this time—into a peat moss. Judged by this standard, the real Grand Coup should consist of stag, salmon, and woodcock figuring at the dinner-table as the result of one day's sport.

There is but little more than a week in which it is possible to combine these three, viz. from about the 9th to the 20th of October; unless, indeed, there be some home-bred woodcock, but even then they so rarely remain in the place of their birth that it is only an off-chance. The period may be extended by substituting a hind for a stag, and this also would make the feat possible in the late winter or early spring, when the rivers open again and the woodcock return from Ireland on their journey to Norway for the honeymoon.

For years it had been my dream to accomplish this, and I tried several places in succession. At my first venture, though the island abounded in deer and cock, there was no river big enough to hold salmon. A certain noble lord was reported to have spent several thousand pounds in the attempt to make one; but water won't run uphill for anyone, and the first big spate that came undermined the dam and blew it up. In my own private opinion I could have done better with a spade in a very few weeks by diverting the little burn by the lodge into the big one. The little one spated four times to the other's once, and there was only one place where possibly a charge of dynamite might have been necessary. At the next shooting, though the river did hold salmon, they were the colour of copper kettles and very stiff to rise. But at my third venture there did seem to be a good chance.

The little river ran into the sea-loch close by the lodge, and there were three or four likely pools immediately under the front windows; while the hill at the back was a very favourite haunt of woodcock. The chance, therefore, for two out of the three was close at hand. On the days when we intended to go out with the rifle it was customary to try the river before breakfast, as the salmon is by far the most captious and unreliable of the three. Woodcock are capricious enough, Heaven knows; but why a salmon should one day be ready to rise at a sparrow at the end of a clothes-line, and on another apparently similar day refuse to look at even the smallest silver doctor on a grilse-cast, is a thing no fellah can understand.

The watcher at these shootings lived at the other end of the glen, some five or six miles off; but about half-way, just where the road turned nearly at a right angle, was a hill which commanded a view both ways, his house and the lodge being visible from it. 'Where is the watcher?' I asked the head keeper the first time I went out stalking. 'I'm thinking Tonalt will be after spying us from Yon Toppie,' was his reply. So the hill was always called Yon Toppie. It is very advisable to give names to places that don't seem to have one; it much facilitates directions. 'You try Shepherd's Elbow, while I go along the other branch of the burn,' is so much simpler than saying, 'You try that hollow—the place, you know, where you hit your shin against a stone last year, and swore so frightfully that I feared it would send your gun off.' The said Shepherd's Elbow was evidently once the bed of a small loch—now dry—having stray rocks hidden amongst the bracken, which caught one horribly on the knees and legs. A shepherd was reported to have broken his elbow against a stone—or a stone against his elbow, I forget which—hence the name.

Some few years since, on October 19, I intended to go out stalking for the last time that season, and, as usual, tried the river first. The two best casts proved unproductive, but a fish rose at me in the third, evidently a salmon or large grilse; but, alas! he came short. After waiting the traditional five minutes (best calculated, perhaps, by smoking a cigarette) I cast again. Another rise—and this time in him. To my horror it was only a large sea-trout, who rushed up and down—or, rather, down and up—the pool, effectually alarming all other occupants. Why is it that salmon object so much to seeing a sea-trout caught, but don't mind in the least if it is one of their own species? It really seems as if they said to one another, 'Only look what a game Joe is having up there;' while the experienced elderly salmon looks up at him out of the corner of his eye, and says, 'Ah, I guess Joe has taken another hornet.' No, Joe, that is no hornet, but something far worse—you have made your last rise—your last struggle for life and freedom; unless some accident happens, you will be duly gaffed, knocked on the head, weighed (by estimation at first, and then by the disappointing steelyard), and finally have your merits discussed at the dinner-table. I trust you did not suffer more really than the duck who has its neck wrung by the cook, but I 'hae me doots.' The pool being thus spoilt by that silly sea-trout, I went home to breakfast, and during the meal heard that Donald was to be seen on Yon Toppie; this meant a

TO MY HUGE DELIGHT HE SPREAD-EAGLED AGAINST THE SKY

stag somewhere handy. Sending on the head keeper with the rifle and glasses, I followed him on the bicycle, and arrived just as Donald came down to meet us. The result of their 'confab' was that we were to try the corries to the west, for which the wind also was suitable. Hiding the cycle in the heather, we started; face after face did we spy, and corrie after corrie, seeing nothing but hinds, whom we had to dodge, till in the last corrie but one on that side of the Great Corrie we unfortunately stumbled on to some stray sheep, who immediately, of course, made off and put up the quarry. As luck would have it, he did not unsight us long (as we were pretty high up), coming into view again about three-quarters of a mile off, and we marked him down in a small corrie right on the line for home. Here arose a serious difference of opinion between myself and the keeper, he wishing to stalk him from to leeward; this I positively declined to do, knowing well what it means, viz. crawling in sight for half an hour through a maze of dhulochs. The first (and last) time I tried that, the water ran out of my waistcoat pockets at the conclusion of the stalk, in addition to which we stalked the wrong beastie! Ultimately he agreed to try the direct stalk, which would give us a side wind, and brought me up close—too close, in fact, the distance being little more than seventy yards. Fortunately I aimed low enough, and hit him through the lower part of the heart; he ran a few yards and then fell. *Now* for the woodcock. Without waiting for the gralloch I swallowed a mouthful or two and started off for home down by the waterfall—down the waterfall it nearly was, for my foot slipped and I went in. Fortunately it was only the lower part, and but half of that; had it been the upper part it would have been most serious. I got a rare ducking, but was not hurt. Disinterring the bicycle from its lair in the heather, I rode home as fast as I could, and, hastily donning a dry kilt and shirt, snatched up the gun and cartridges and started up the hill behind the lodge. I reckoned on having a good hour's more daylight, but that was little enough. The light was failing fast as I came over the edge of the likeliest hollow in the burn, but still I could see well enough above the skyline. I heard one get up, though I did not see him; and knowing by experience that he would in all probability go over the waterfall at the top I waited, and, sure enough, saw him in the exact spot. I fired, and to my huge delight he spread-eagled against the sky. 'Great Scott, if he won't go down the fall!' I threw down the gun (it cost a prolonged search in the dark for it afterwards) and rushed up to the spot. Not a trace—save a feather or

two on the further bank. I looked for him in vain as long as it was possible to see (and again the next morning), but without success, and finally had to stumble home in the dark without the *spolia opima.*

Somehow I seemed to feel that morning that it was now or never. Everything looked favourable. The wind was in the right airt, the river fining down after a spate, and a woodcock had been seen in the glen two or three days before. Now I am getting old and rheumatic, and shudder at the thought of taking my boots off in order to cross a scriogain (*Anglicè*: scree) in silence. Still, I should like to hear if anyone has brought off the true Grand Coup.

WINTER SPORTS IN THE CANTON DES GRISONS

BY ELISABETH P. L. HIGGIN

THANKS to the equable temperature of the sea-girt British Isles, we English have not much experience in our own land of sports connected with ice and snow. To enjoy these we must go further afield to some other climate where severe frost holds undisputed sway during the season of prolonged winter. Switzerland is the country possessing this desideratum which we can reach with greatest ease, and of its different districts it is in the Canton des Grisons that we find cold-weather sports most fully developed. On the Lake of Geneva there is often ice for a few weeks only, and Grindelwald is not much frequented save at Christmas-time, so that Davos, St. Moritz, and more recently Arosa, are the favourite haunts of the tobogganer and skater.

The traveller by the eleven o'clock express from Charing Cross or Victoria finds himself about noon on the following day at the small junction of Landquart in the Rhine Valley, whence the little narrow-gauge railway ascends to Davos. The way to the other two winter colonies leads for another half-hour along the main line to Chur, and from there the roads to St. Moritz and to Arosa diverge in different directions. St. Moritz is to have its railway soon, but in the meantime Davos is the most easily accessible place of the three. A crawl of two hours in a very slow train through the Praettigau Valley brings the traveller to the little

village of Klosters, where he finally bids farewell to the slushy winter weather of the lowlands and enters the dominions of the Ice King in his Alpine fastnesses. From here the line zigzags along the hillside in the very steep ascent which follows, and an hour after leaving Klosters the engine puffs noisily into the terminus of Davos Platz. When the little mountain railway was first opened, grave doubts were entertained as to the possibility of keeping it free from snow, but a snow-plough locomotive and stalwart Swiss with shovels have so far been able to cope with the clements, except during one very exceptional storm. It is too dark to see

Photo—Sigrist

DAVOS PLATZ IN WINTER

anything of Davos when the train arrives, so we will suppose that the newcomer approaches his window with some interest when he wakes the following morning. He finds himself in a long narrow valley bounded on both sides by high mountains, and apparently closed in at the lower end by the pointed peak of the Tinzenhorn. The sunlight is as yet only on the hill tops, but is creeping slowly downwards towards the village of Davos, which lies in shadow. In the middle of the valley he sees the ice rink, the centre of attraction for him if skating is his hobby. In that case he will doubtless swallow a hasty breakfast, seize his skates, and set out for the scene of his pleasures.

On a fine day in mid-winter the Davos rink presents a most animated appearance. Here people of all ages and of every nationality, whether proficient or unproficient, disport themselves on skates. You see the unhappy beginner either clutching his chair or towed along by a more capable friend; couples swing gracefully past you on the outside edge in harmony of heart and of motion; a long line of schoolboys swoop down upon you hand in hand; and in a prominent position in the middle of the ice a noted exponent of the German school of skating whirls madly round and round and round on one toe, while he flourishes the other in the air in most amazing fashion. At one end a group of curlers are entirely engrossed by the roaring game. The scene is gayest in the afternoons, when skaters skim along to the strains of the band, and non-skaters watch the fun from the pavilion. When sunset has dispersed the crowd, a band of hockey players often takes possession.

The rink managed by the English Skating Club, and devoted to figure-skating only, lies alongside the general enclosure, and is divided from it by a low bank. In former days, when there was only one rink, many passages of arms used to occur between the votaries of figure and of straightforward skating. Some ignoramus would, perhaps, heedlessly invade the sacred circle, round which an earnest student was laboriously plodding at the outside edge, and has even been known to sweep away the orange which served as centre. Once a rather amusing incident took place. An English lady was wheeling round her orange greatly to her own satisfaction, when an elderly and somewhat infirm gentleman just able to toddle on skates with the help of a stick, who had been watching her for some time, said in a quavering voice: 'I think, perhaps, I could help you to pick up that orange?' On the other hand, the shaky straightforward skater did not relish a collision with an athletic expert hurrying along on the outside back, so it was to the satisfaction of both parties when they parted company. The English Davos Skating Club, which was formed many years ago to encourage figure-skating in Davos, is affiliated to the National Skating Association of Great Britain, and now numbers among its members some of the best exponents of the English school of skating. There is a fairly stiff test for admission, which is modified in the case of ladies, and the successful candidate has the privilege of using the Club rink. Nationality is no bar to entrance, but, as a rule, it is only English people who have the energy to qualify. Some years ago the Club instituted a competition for a silver bowl, presented by the president, Dr. C. E.

Williams, to become the property of the person winning it three times in succession, in which, however, nobody has as yet been successful. Although all comers are invited to compete, only first-class skaters have any chance, so that the entries are very small as a rule. The test consists of two parts. In the first half all the threes, the bracket rocking and counter rocking turns are performed, turning at a centre, and with a curve of at least forty feet before and after the turn. In the second part, combined figures are skated in pairs. Several judges note down separately the points they think due to each candidate, and he who has scored

Photo—Sigrist

SPEED-SKATING RACES AT DAVOS

most marks wins the bowl. A scrape, a bent knee, a knock to the orange, all tell strongly against success, and pace and form are much considered.

Although the struggle for the bowl awakens a keen interest among English visitors, the competitions organised by the International Skating Club of Davos—a club which patronises the foreign style of skating, and to which anybody can belong by paying a subscription—are far more generally popular. For several years past speed-skating and figure-skating contests have taken place for prizes sufficiently large to attract entries from all parts of Europe. For speed-skating the circumference of the

large rink is roped off to form a racing-track, round and round which the skaters fly till they have completed the required distance. The prize goes to the competitor who makes the fastest time of all, but the racers run in pairs, so as mutually to incite each other to a better pace. Clad in close-fitting jackets, dark-blue tights, top-boots provided with long hollow skate-blades, their shoulders bent forwards, their arms waving to and fro, they remind the onlooker somewhat of a windmill hard at work. Some years ago one racer created a great excitement. He was observed to be bleeding at the lips, and it was thought that in his frantic efforts he had broken a blood-vessel. Public sympathy somewhat abated, however, when it was discovered that the man was merely sucking a piece of raw steak to prevent the cold air from catching his breath.

The figure-skating contests take place in the centre of the rink. The first part of the programme consists of obligatory figures; but in the second competitors are invited to exhibit their best feats in the limited time of five minutes, and wonderful are the capers they cut. A favourite performance is to spin rapidly round on one foot, and, still revolving, bend the knee almost to the level of the ice, then slowly work up again.

Or a man will throw himself violently backwards on to the ice, and suddenly leap to his feet after the manner of an acrobat. Spread eagles, cross cuts, and loops, executed with a tremendous flourish, are much in vogue. Last winter was a gala season for the Davos rink. The contest for the European championship in speed and figure skating was held on it in January, while the meeting to decide the amateur figure championship of the world was transferred here in February from Vienna on account of want of frost in the lowlands. The pleasure of both events was unfortunately marred by the weather; but as Davos is an easily accessible place, where ice in winter is a certainty, it seems probable that it will in future become the headquarters of European skating, and that the climate may have an early opportunity of vindicating its reputation.

The bowl competition and the figure-skating meeting organised by the International Club generally take place within a few days of one another, so that the spectator has a good opportunity of comparing the English and foreign styles. The English school teaches that the body should be kept upright, the knee unbent, 'the unemployed leg' kept behind its fellow in all the turns and all the edges. 'Never allow the unemployed to stray' is one maxim; 'skate large' is another. This method produces

bold curves executed without apparent effort; but it must be owned that there is a little truth in the remark made by a detractor that an Englishman looks as though he had swallowed the poker and had not yet digested it. In foreign skating legs and arms are held anyhow, and, in fact, it does not matter how a figure is performed as long as it is executed with ease. The edges are generally small and much curved. The question as to the merits of the rival schools is one which no sensible man will argue, and may be relegated to the same category as fair trade

THE KULM RINK AT ST. MORITZ

versus free trade, bimetallism *versus* mono-metallism. There is no doubt, however, that foreign skating appeals more to the gallery, even an Englishman preferring it at first sight to the severe British style.

At St. Moritz, where there is no skating club, most of the hotels have private rinks for the use of their own *clientèle*. The Kulm, the first hotel kept open in winter, has three—two for skating and one for curling—which are under the management of a committee with the approval of the proprietor. Figure-skating was much in vogue at St. Moritz some years ago, but it has

lately declined owing to the crowded state of the rinks and the consequent difficulty of practising. There is, however, some hope that a new rink may be made and reserved exclusively for figure-skating, as in Davos. As there are no competitions at St. Moritz, the ambitious skater sets his heart on obtaining the first and second class St. Moritz skating badges, which are open to all comers of both sexes. The first class includes all the edges, backwards and forwards eights, and the C turn, while for the second a more finished performance of the same figures is required with turns A, B, and D, forwards threes, to a centre and four or five combined

ST. MORITZ IN WINTER

figures in addition. If the ordeal is passed successfully, the candidate becomes the possessor of a badge consisting of crossed skates with the letters S.M. in silver for the first-class and in gold for the second. Arosa, too, has a rink, yet so far it cannot compare with those of Davos and St. Moritz. But, however good a rink may be, nothing in the skater's estimation comes up to lake skating. Of course the lakes, both at Davos and St. Moritz, bear every winter for several months, but it often happens that frost sets in either before or during a snow fall, and the ice is ruined. Given, however, a hard frost followed by a spell of fine weather, and the result is perfection. One lake covered with ice

is very like another, so a description of the Davoser-see seen under the best conditions will serve for all. Imagine a plain of thick black ice, as yet unmarked by skate, stretching from the steep sides of the cone-shaped Seehorn with its lines of dark fir trees to the slopes of the Doerfliberg opposite, which rise in great dazzling snow-fields to meet the deep blue sky. To your left is the Fluela Pass, the road to the Engadine, while over the low-lying mountain spurs to the left the Davos-Landquart Railway leads out of this peaceful valley into the wide bustling world beyond. The boom of the cracking ice echoes from side to side; the water below laps against its covering as though it would suck you into its depths. You reach a spot a few yards from the bank where the bed of the lake plunges down suddenly into unfathomable darkness. So clear is the ice that as you stand above you feel as though there were nothing between you and the abyss. You remember with horror the old tradition how a wedding party crossing the lake on sleighs was engulfed and seen no more. But a truce to such sad thoughts. With one stroke you glide on to the outside edge and skim away in long easy curves. The smooth surface offers no resistance; movement seems no effort. You appear to have passed in one second into a different world, where labour and weariness have no place. With a skate-blade as the only connecting link with earth, surely this is the nearest approach to the flight of a swallow that we mortals can ever hope to know! There is a prosaic side to the picture which must not be forgotten. See the picnic parties lunching at the lake side to the gay strains of the band. One enterprising hotel has moved its entire *table d'hôte*, and its guests sit at a properly laid table, served by waiters, who as they flit to and fro seem to find the ice more slippery than the parquet floors to which they are accustomed.

And now we must pass to tobogganing, the most characteristic sport of the Canton des Grisons. In the days before the stranger set foot in these valleys the handschlitten, the native Swiss sledge, was only used by children in their play hours or by grown-up people as a mode of locomotion when the road over which they wished to travel was sufficiently inclined. But the advent of the Englishman brought a change. With his quick eye for sport he saw at once that much amusement could be extracted from the queer-looking little craft, and the stolid Swiss soon viewed with amazement the strange sight of bearded men careering about on toboggans for pleasure. The first colony of winter visitors to the Canton des Grisons settled in Davos, and

there we must trace the beginnings of the sport of tobogganing. In early days the handschlitten was the only class of machine used. The rider sits on it with a foot on each side, and used originally to guide by a touch of his heels in the snow, but later on it was found easier to steer by means of short sticks fitted with iron points held in the hands. A cushion with a lump in the middle to prevent the tobogganer from slipping forwards was the next improvement. In the early 'eighties it occurred to an English visitor to organise a toboggan race, and the first event of that nature ever held took place on the road to Klosters. Later on an annual international race was instituted for a cup presented

Photo—Sigrist

MEN ON HANDSCHLITTEN

by the late Mr. John Addington Symonds, open to natives of the Canton des Grisons, to visitors to Davos, and to visitors to St. Moritz, which had by this time become a winter resort. When this race was first started it was the most exciting event of the winter. Nothing else was talked of in the English quarter for weeks beforehand: bets were laid, sweepstakes were held, and high words between the partisans of the different favourites were not unknown. On the great day itself every vehicle in the place (the railway was as yet undreamt of), from a hay-sleigh to an hotel omnibus, found its way to Klosters. After the result of the race had been declared there was a monster lunch at the

Hotel Silvretta, and then a slow procession up the hill to Davos, where the winner was greeted with enthusiasm and generally carried in triumph into his hotel. A few years later a revolution in tobogganing took place. One of our Transatlantic cousins introduced the American coaster, a much longer, lower, and heavier machine than the handschlitten, and rode it lying on his side, face forwards. He guided by touching the snow with the toe of one foot extended behind and by shoving the nose of his mount round with his hands. It soon became evident that the newcomer could run away from the handschlitten, and that the two classes of toboggans could not compete on equal terms. The old international race was therefore limited to Swiss

HANDSCHLITTEN AND A SKELETON

machines, and another race open to all styles was instituted. Shortly afterwards, another American discovered that he could obtain better results by lying flat on his chest and by steering with both toes stuck out behind, and this position is now universally adopted by men on the coaster. Ladies still either sit upright or lie sideways. The flat method has so far, owing to its ungracefulness, only been adopted by little girls, but there is no doubt that the woman who can invent a suitable costume for it will carry all before her in tobogganing. In the ladies' races at Davos, St. Moritz, and Arosa, not run under handicap, the first prize almost invariably goes to a headforemost rider. There is, however, an international ladies' race at Davos for a trophy

presented by Mr. Freeman which is limited to handschlitten. The American coaster in its turn has undergone many changes since its first arrival in the Canton des Grisons. It has gained in length and in weight, and more metal and less wood is being gradually used in its composition. One type, the skeleton, is entirely made of iron bars, and its further development, the giant skeleton, is so heavy that it requires a strong man to steer it round a corner, and a still stronger to pull it up a hill. The perfect toboggan like the perfect horse is still to seek; but there is probably much truth in the theory that different types suit different courses, and that a man should choose his mount in

Photo—J. H. Berd

A TAILING PARTY

accordance with the state of the run at the moment. It is, however, exceedingly hard to choose aright, and as there is luck in tobogganing as in every sport, a race sometimes falls to the man who has made a lucky hit. The so-called Klosters course, the chief Davos toboggan track, is over the last two miles of the highway between Davos and Klosters. For the first three miles the road to the head of the run is on nearly level ground, leading past the lake to the Davoser Kulm, the watershed between the Davos and Praettigau Valleys. In the days before the railway, excursionists to Klosters used to 'tail' over this part of the route—that is to say, they attached their toboggans to a sleigh

either in one row or in two parallel lines, sat on them, and were towed along. The tail swings merrily from side to side, and the people at the end have a bad time of it. Introductions are not *de rigueur* on a tailing party. 'Do please take hold of my hand' sounds a rather forward request made by a young lady to a total stranger of the opposite sex, but the context 'and pull me out of the ditch' makes it a perfectly innocent remark. Nowadays, tobogganers generally go by train to the Kulm station, but tailing parties to other places are still in vogue.

From Kulm to Klosters the road is all downhill, but only when the track is in first-class order can the whole distance be

Photo—Carl Reisch

A START FOR A TOBOGGAN RACE AT KLOSTERS

ridden, for the third mile from the top is only on a very slight incline. A well-known tobogganer when alighting from the train at Kulm once challenged the guard to a race to Klosters. The man laughed in derision, but when the iron horse steamed into Klosters it found its wooden rival already on the platform. As a rule, however, after a good fast spin of a mile and a half from Kulm, the tobogganer has to dismount and drag his machine to the head of the two-miles racecourse, which ends at Klosters. The starting point is just at the bend of the road, and a very draughty place it is. Races in the Canton des Grisons are decided by the length of time spent on the descent, and as a minute's interval is allowed between each competitor, the man

who draws the last place has a long and weary wait when there are many entries. 'Are you ready? 20 seconds, 10, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, Go!' sounds the voice of the starter, and off struggles the racer, either pushing himself off with his pegs if he is on a handschlitten, or propelling himself forwards by means of his toes stuck into the snow if on a coaster. Once round the corner the pace quickens, and if the run is in good condition he will have no further trouble, and must direct his attention to getting round the zigzags as fast as is compatible with safety; but if there has been a recent snow-fall a further push is necessary from time to time. Once or twice when there was little snow on the ground,

Photo—Sigrist

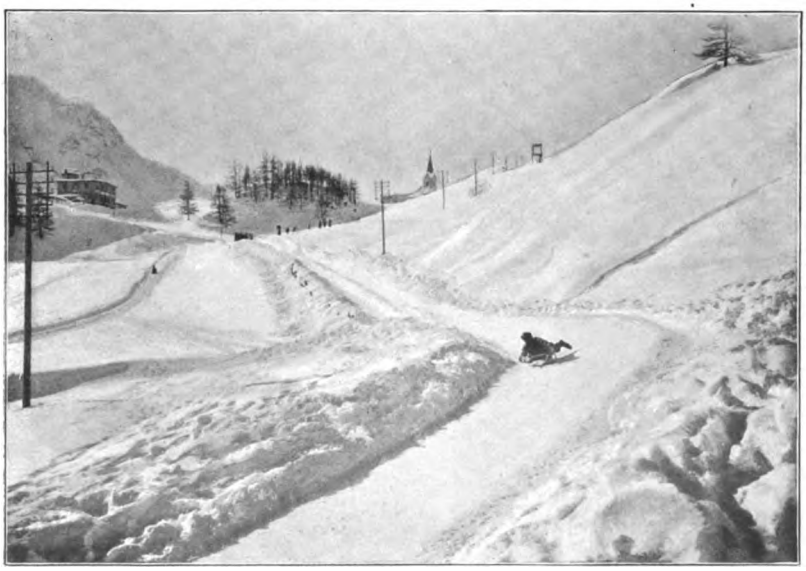
THE LAST CORNER AT KLOSTERS

the International has been run on a road coated with ice. That is excitement, indeed! As the racer nears each corner, he feels that it must be his last. A force against which it seems vain to struggle seems to sweep him towards the side of the track and over on to the rocks below. He throws his balance to the inside; he digs his peg or his steel-capped toe into the ice; oh! joy, the craft answers to the helm, and he is saved. He flies along a straight piece of course towards a double zigzag, above which towers a large, grey rock crowded with spectators. Another struggle, another moment of uncertainty, safe once more. The cheers of the onlookers sound dully in his deafened

ears as he speeds away to the turn before the last, a curve so sharp that all pace must be taken off and the toboggan regularly forced round. A shove, a scuffle, and a slide, and he has conquered. One wild, final rush down the last piece of straight ending in the last corner of all at the first houses of Klosters, where many before him have dashed themselves against the palings and through them into the field beyond. Here both sides of the track are black with spectators, who fall back at his approach. There is a singing in his ears, all things around him loom vaguely through a mist, he puts forth his strength in one despairing effort, pulls his toboggan round, and all danger is over. A few yards further on he glides past the winning post; 'In' calls the timekeeper, the assistant stops the watch, and he pulls up in Klosters in the centre of a dense crowd. For some minutes he sits panting on his wooden horse, but gradually animation returns, his brain clears, and he starts up to discover his place in the race. The record for the Klosters course is held by Mr. Bertie Dwyer, who did the two miles in 4 min. 34 sec. in 1897, when the track was a sheet of ice. As a rule, however, the run is covered with well-beaten snow, high banks guard the sides, and rocks and stones are hidden away under the soft, white mantle—a state of things which makes if not for pace at least for safety. Races also take place on the Clavadel road, a course greatly resembling that of Klosters, and on the ice run, which is made entirely for tobogganing, built up with snow on both sides and with an iced surface. Its position and length vary from year to year, but it usually measures about half a mile. The pace is very fast, and a header over the sides into the snow is far from pleasant.

At St. Moritz the Grand National Toboggan Race, corresponding to the Davos International and instituted three years after it, is the great event in the tobogganing world. It is open to every style of toboggan and to riders of all nationalities, but in reality the American machine is the only one used, and nearly all the starters are English and Americans, though the holder of the record is a Swiss. The race consists of three heats, and is won by the competitor who makes the fastest aggregate time. The Cresta run, on which it takes place, is a magnificent ice run of about three-quarters of a mile, but, unfortunately, its full length is only open for a short time each year. Starting on the hillside, high above the valley, the course presents few difficulties till it plunges into a short narrow defile, named after a church close by 'the church leap.' The toboggan first rushes up the right-hand

bank almost to the foot of the trees at the top, then dashes wildly across up the opposite side of the gully, whence it is flung off once more on to a lower slope on the right again, and is finally left to pursue, with or without a rider, its perilous career towards the bottom of the valley. Once this obstacle lies behind him, the tobogganer, like the newly-made husband who telegraphed to his friends at St. Moritz 'safely over the church leap,' feels that the worst is over, though possibly in both cases there is a tendency to underrate the difficulties still to come. Battledore and Shuttlecock, two nasty corners close together, one at each side of the track, have to be faced; then down a glorious piece of



THE CRESTA RUN. ST. MORITZ

straight across the high road, past Bulpett's corner, on to the Cresta leap, a sudden descent where the machine, if it is travelling at great speed, sometimes leaves the ground altogether and flies through the air for a few yards till it reaches the flat at the end of the run. The record of 1 min. $8\frac{7}{10}$ sec. for the three-quarters of a mile was made by Herr E. Thoma in 1899. The starting point for the ladies' race is generally just above the church leap, so that they ride over a shorter distance than the men, but this year it was below it. For those who find the Cresta too sporting, there is the village run, which, though it is also generally kept iced, is much less severe. On this the race for the Ashbourne

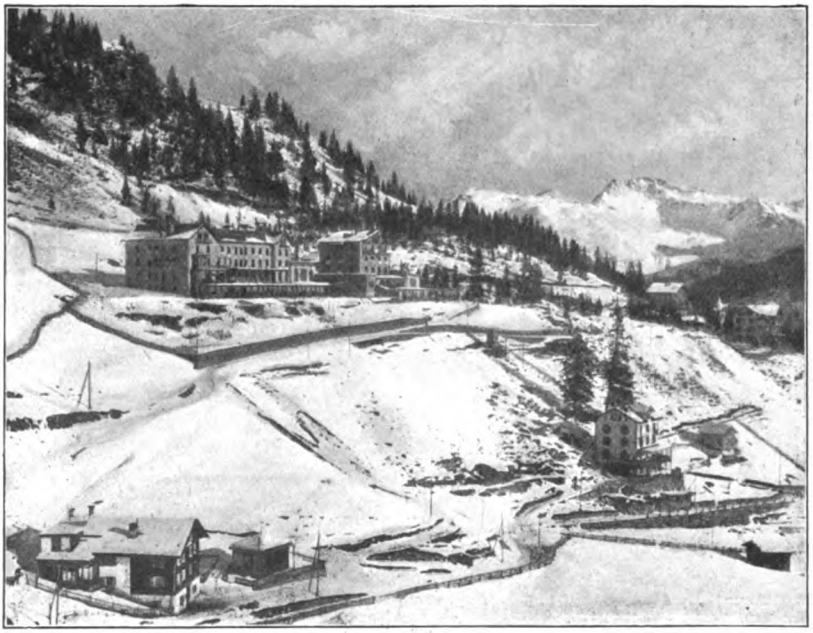
Cup (a trophy presented by Lord Ashbourne), open to all types of toboggan, was originally held, but was last winter transferred to the Cresta course. A mile and a quarter of the high road between St. Moritz and Cresta, a little village lying further down the valley from which the runs takes its name, affords good bobsleighing, a form of tobogganing requiring some explanation. Imagine a long narrow board fixed at each end to a toboggan with a steering apparatus in front, by means of which the foremost machine can be moved to and fro, and fitted with a powerful brake behind. As many people as can find room crowd on to it,

Photo—Sigrist

A BOBSLEIGH AND ITS LOAD

sitting one behind the other, and away it tilts at break-neck speed, clearing all before it like a cavalry charge. Bobsleighs are not allowed on ice runs, as the brakes cut up the surface, and races of this sort are always held on roads, though it is probable that in the future a special track will have to be engineered for them on account of the danger to the traffic. To go further afield round St. Moritz, the descent from the summit of the Julier Pass to the Engadine Valley offers very good tobogganing when the track is well beaten, and twelve miles away, at the Maloja, the road to Italy runs for several miles in a series of zigzags, very hard to negotiate, but all the dearer on that account to the heart of the expert.

Arosa has so recently become a winter resort that ice sports are not yet fully developed there, but it also has its annual toboggan races, which attract visitors from the other colonies. The Grand Prix d'Arosa, limited to Swiss toboggans only, and the Omnium race, open to all classes, are held on two miles of the post road, which winds down from the village of Arosa perched on the hillside towards Langwies in the valley below. The course resembles that of Klosters in character. Last winter a new ice track, three-quarters of a mile long, was opened and inaugurated by races both for men and for ladies, but, though it



AROSA IN WINTER

is decidedly sporting, it is not yet equal to the Davos and St. Moritz runs.

So far we have only considered the sporting side of tobogganing, but it has its romance as well. Our satellite does not lose her glamour, though she shines on trackless snowfields, and peers through dusky pine woods instead of shimmering over southern lakes and magnolia groves. A wonderful fascination lurks in the mysterious forest, in the glistening snow, and in the trickling of the half-frozen stream, and a moonlight expedition is a dangerous thing. Mrs. Grundy in the Canton des Grisons has now

almost agreed to the theory propounded by a Canadian visitor that chaperons are out of place in a cold country; but a few years ago she was not so complaisant, and a party of young people bound for Klosters were solemnly placed under the wing of a duenna, who, as she did not toboggan, plodded wearily down the five-miles descent while her charges skimmed airily ahead. Several promising love affairs ripened into engagements that evening, of course, well out of earshot of the chaperon.

When spring comes and the roads and runs are slushy, a fresh phase of tobogganing begins. The heat of the sun melts the surface of the snow on the meadows; it freezes again at night,

Photo - Sigrist

SNOW-SHOEING

and the result is a hard crust, which bears during the morning hours. The whole valley is thrown open to the early riser, who can wander at will over the fields; but woe betide the lingerer, for as the day advances the covering will give way and he will drop into several feet of snow below. At this season snowshoeing has many votaries. The Norwegian snowshoes which are used are thin, narrow pieces of wood, about two yards long, attached to the feet by leather thongs. It is all very well for the expert, but the beginner has a terrible time of it. The two planks must be kept parallel; if they cross, a headforemost plunge into the snow is the result. The proficient snowshoer makes mountain expedi-

tions in mid-winter, sinking only a few inches into the soft snow; but the novice generally contents himself with climbing laboriously up some steep slope near at hand and then sliding down again, assisted by a long pole which he drags behind him. It is very difficult to keep your balance, and there is a horrible feeling that your legs are going to shoot away from under you. The safest position is to bend the knees and to lean slightly forwards. Needless to say, the enthusiastic curler has a fine time of it in the Canton des Grisons. Instead of the day or two of ice which is his portion at home, he begins the season with the certainty that three months of frost lie before him. Hockey on the ice is popular too, and during the Davos and St. Moritz race weeks hockey and curling matches are played between teams of visitors at the two places, and create quite as much interest as the Oxford and Cambridge Boat Race does in England. It must not be supposed, however, that the winter sojourner in the Canton des Grisons must rely for amusement on outdoor pastimes only, though these are most typical of the district. Theatricals, concerts, dinner-parties, and balls follow each other in quick succession. The inner man, too, is well cared for in the various hotels. A fine climate, comfortable quarters, plenty of fun indoors, and a good deal of society—all these add greatly to the attractions of winter sports in the Canton des Grisons.

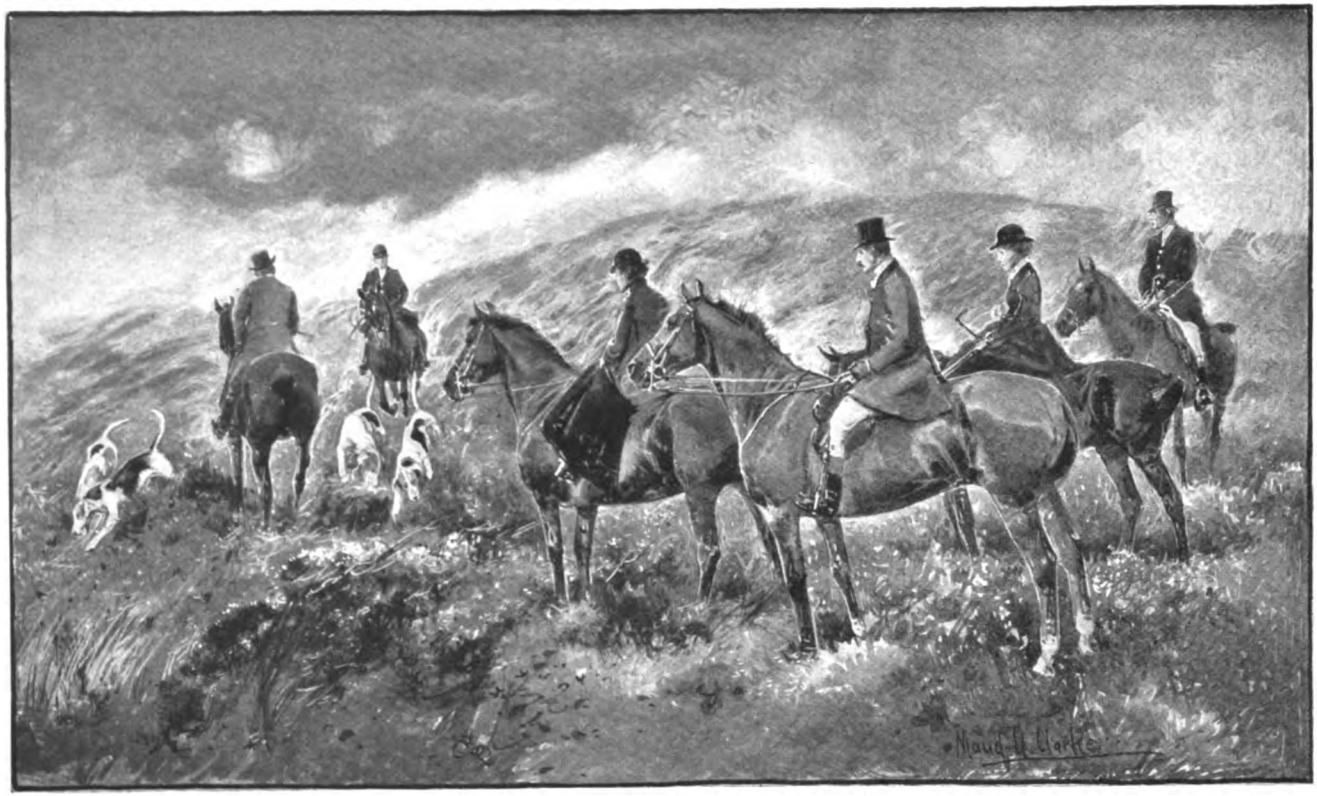
A MOORLAND RIDE

BY MRS. WHITEHORNE

It was late afternoon; a golden October day had ended in a dull, overcast evening, and from the great wooded valley where we had hunted all day, a grey mist was softly rolling up, shadowing swiftly the bare hill tops, brown with heather, of which the crimson glory had nearly passed, and shutting out from our sight the spurs of the great moor that ended seawards, and the leaden Severn Sea that had gleamed blue and far in the earlier sunshine.

We were few and tired now, who had been many and gay in the crisp morning, and yet we rode wearily on and up, our backs to the great valley, and our faces towards the open moor, whence we could hear, faint and seldom, the huntsman's horn, and his distant voice holloaing on his hounds on a difficult scent. Only now and then we heard him, and each time we paused and asked each other, Was it on—was it back—or to right, or left? For the rolling mist, overtaking us as we rode, made ear seem doubtful and treacherous as eye.

After one such pause, our leader, an old hunting squire, whose name was known farther than his own west country as true sportsman and gallant rider, and whom we followed unquestioning, turned from the road up which we had clattered behind him, through a broken railing on his right, sharply down a thick pine wood, and, before we knew, we were slipping after him through the close tree stems, each as best we could, our horses sitting back almost on their tails, as the soft, peaty slope gave under their feet, and our faces whipt by the sharp little pine twigs that grew low and leafless, starved by the wealth of dark



OUR HORSES PRICKED THEIR EARS AND STOOD AT ATTENTION

boughs above. Steeper the slope grew, and steeper, till below we saw the little green track our guide was seeking. Each chose his own place to break from the wood, and, sitting back to the crupper, or springing down to ease the descent of his tired horse, we slipped or scrambled into the bracken and turf-grown track that led upwards to the moor, round the curve of the deep combe that else had barred our way. Then we gathered ourselves together after our scramble, and with a word or a touch to our horses we turned and galloped upwards with a soft thud of flying hoofs on the thick turf, for half a mile or more. Through low larch plantations, sweet and fragrant in the chill evening, with here and there a breath of warmer air left among them from the aromatic warmth of the golden afternoon; through old oak woods, where the gnarled and misshapen boughs almost blocked our passage, or nearly swept us from our saddles; round the sharp curves made by the heads of tiny combes, where the pathway narrowed so that one had to take a pull at the eager horse, keen to follow others, though tired alone, and go delicately, and then up through the lessening larches, dwarfed and twisted from their struggle with the cruel moor winds of winter, to where nothing was round us but sombre heather and marsh grass, yellowing and coarse, and in the drifting mist and growing darkness, we could see our guide on his stout little horse, leaning his head to where the sluggish chill air brought faintly the sound of the huntsman's voice. Nearer it came and nearer; our horses pricked their ears and stood at attention, and out of the mist there burst two couple of splendid hounds, who crossed the rough track one by one, almost at our horses' feet, and, still hot on a scent, though running quite silently, disappeared where the fog touched the brow of the hill. After them came the huntsman, saluted hastily by our leader with a question, to which the reply came back as he galloped past: 'Tis only a hind they'm after, sir.' And since we have not yet come to the time of year at which hinds may be hunted, that means, even more than the closing darkness and gathering mist, the end of the day's sport for the keenest of us. A movement in the little knot of horses, a shake of the bridle and a cheery 'Good-night,' a comforting scent of tobacco as some light cigar or pipe; all, singly or in groups of two or three, turn and part, each on his homeward way, and I and my good little mare alone take the upward track that leads to the great beech hedge which skirts for miles the highest top of all the moor. By that I may safely steer my way till I break from it into the little used track,

marked only at long intervals by low stones sunk in heather or bog-land, that will take me to my farm-home in the valley by the sea.

And I did not fear my lonely ride. The early dark of autumn was gathering quickly about me, and the drifting and swaying grey mist was drawing round ; but the way home had been ridden by me and my moor-bred mare often and often, in fair weather, or foul daylight storms, and though never before in darkness and in fog, still, I did not fear.

As we gained the beech hedge, looming even larger than its goodly self in the uncertain light, and put mile after mile of it behind us at swaying canter and steady trot, I thought out my way to myself. A turn across a piece of open moor, a road to cross, a narrow hunting-gate to open—I hoped it would not be sunk on its hinges, and fast, as the last time I passed it—an old disused cart-track across the wide-spreading boggy head of a moor stream, and then I should see before me, were the mist and dark not grown too thick, the sombre belt of black fir trees that shut in three sides of the shepherd's house, the loneliest house on all the moor.

After that it was easy—a swampy field or two to cross from gate to gate, and then to turn just at the right place on the bare moor, where my home track led over the allotments where the farmers cut their turf, and left thereby large black peaty holes into which a horse might stumble. But there were the guiding stones—and my mare should know the road well, for though her home lay off to the left across a deep valley where were still the ruined huts of the robbers who once made the moor a terror to peaceful folk, yet she had always had her food and tending at my home before she went to hers, and even should I fail to recognise my road, she would know it.

I laughed to myself as I thought on this unlikely necessity, and looking up, fancied I saw a slight lessening of the drifting mist above my head, and though darker than it had been, it was not so very dark—I could see the end of the beech hedge clearly as I turned from it, and the worn track in the heather beneath my mare's feet was visible for quite a yard or two ahead, if I leant and looked. There was a small driving rain, too, beating on my cheek as I rode, and I was almost sure it had beaten on my left cheek when I started for home, and should now drive from behind us, but the wind was shifting, and I could not be quite sure. It still beat on my left, and my mare's short mane was wet with it as I stooped to caress and speak to her. The track to the road

I COULD SEE THE END OF THE BEECH HEDGE CLEARLY

and the hunting-gate seemed long, for I could see little now but the grey wall of mist, growing swiftly darker round me as I rode, and my mare's lean little head with the ears pricked forward, and the heather just beyond and beneath us. Then my mare's hoofs rang clear on the road and we crossed it and came to the hunting-gate—not quite at once, for we struck the hedge too high up, but I could see a little lightening of the dark barrier made by the hedge below us, and the mare turned of herself towards it. I lifted the gate with some difficulty with my thick crop, thankful I had not to dismount and unfasten it, and slowly, for here we must take heed to our feet, we set out across the mile of bogland, covered with coarse thick tussocks of grass, that lay between us and the house of the firs.

For the first time I owned to myself that I wished I had taken the longer way home by the high road—or, that it were not quite so dark and thick. For now, only just above me could I even imagine I saw a faint grey glimmer of light through the fog, and all around me was thick darkness. The driving rain was cold upon my right cheek now, and that, I told myself, was right and comforting—unless the wind had shifted. I spoke to my mare for company and courage, and she answered with a toss of her head, and a quicker movement beneath me; and then I noticed first that she paused now and then, and reaching out, drew the reins through my fingers with a jerk, and then with her freed head stooped and nosed the ground before she would go on. I had heard often that moor-bred horses would smell boggy ground before stepping onwards, and by that means know if it were safe, but I had never experienced it; and wondered a little that she should fear on this known track, which, though soft and plashy always in wet seasons, such as this had been, was nevertheless sound enough to ride. I stooped, peering, to see the track and could not. Faintly I could see, and feel as they swept my stirrup, tall rushes, and I knew that we were no longer on the right road, for there grew nothing higher than the stiff short cotton grass and heather. I shivered a little, for it was cold, and the persistent drive of the rain was chilling me; and I hoped at least that we might not in our wandering come to the span of deep bog round the spring-head of the stream, for there I knew might be danger.

I left the reins upon the mare's neck, loose and low, only drawing the thong of my hunting crop through them, and for a little time she stepped slow and carefully, with her nose almost constantly to the ground; and now and again I could feel her slip, and hear the soft suck of the wet peat as she drew her hoofs

out of some boggy hole. But presently she threw her head up and went more freely, and I could feel the spring of heather and dry turf beneath her feet; and so we came to where the thick belt of firs made a blacker barrier in the darkness that had seemed night itself before, and I knew that we had come, though by what track I knew not, to the shepherd's house that was my last landmark on my way homewards.

I might have harboured there, but I knew the shepherd was away, and the house empty and locked, and that even could I have found an entrance, there was small provision there for either man or beast. So I hardened my heart, and, with the courage of necessity, turned my mare up along by the belt of firs, whence by daylight we could have followed easily enough the small worn track through the rough, wide, stone-walled enclosures that lay round the house, and by which we should reach the open moor again. So dark it was now I hardly knew where the black belt of firs ended on my right hand, but that the driving rain came on us again as we left its shelter. And the darkness was not the friendly, half-transparent gloom of ordinary night, but thick, black, choking fog. Wet and chill, deadening to every sense, stifling to the breath that drew it in, wearying to the aching eyes that strove to pierce it, muffling all sounds to the anxious ears. It was not still, for the wind drove it round and past me in black volumes that I could feel as they swept by; but it closed me in as though with shifting walls of night. My mare went freely enough, as though she knew the way; but, for me, I could not tell any more whether we were on the homeward track or no, but I trusted the mare.

Presently I fancied we passed a gateway, because of the soft mud that plashed wet beneath us, but I could not be sure; and in a little while we came to a closed gate that I knew. The mare pushed it impatiently with a rattle of her bit against the latch, and because of her hurry I could scarcely reach to open it myself. At last I did so, but she had to push long and urgently before it slid unwillingly open enough to let us through—its lower bar making slow thick gurgles in the peat pool at its foot. I did not stay to close it, though I knew I ought to, for it was the last gate of the enclosures, and unless closed the ponies feeding there would certainly be wild upon the moor before the morning; but it would have taken minutes – and minutes had become somehow precious. I touched the mare with my heel, but she hardly responded, and dropped her head again to nose the moor, for she and I both knew that here would begin the peat holes, and a stumble into one of

them in the thick darkness was not lightly to be risked. It seemed a very long time to me that she walked slowly on, stumbling now and then, but never dangerously, and always recovering herself in time. I left all guidance to her again, but I had lost my trust in her a little now. The rain should have driven from behind us, but was coming almost from in front, and surely long before this I should have come to the gate which led off the moor down our own home lane. Presently she faltered, paused, turned back, threw up her head, and so stood.

I reached forward, and patted her neck; spoke to her and asked her to try again—to go on. But she set herself back against my urging, and would not move. I touched her sharply with the whip, but she only turned where she stood, and came round again, with an impatient jerk of her head, against the wind and rain and thick driving darkness.

Then I was sure that she had come to the end of her skill and knowledge, that she had strayed widely from the track, and that we were adrift upon the open moor. I strained my eyes against the wet darkness, but could see nothing—above, below, around me. The night was long and cold before us, and there was no hope of finding home at all before the dawning, if this were so. I felt instinctively for my flask, but even as my hand touched it, I remembered that I had shared it with a friend and emptied it earlier in the day. There was nothing to do then, nothing, but keep moving, lest the long hours to come of cold and rain should chill us to death. I spoke again to my little mare, urgently, almost as if she were a human friend and companion. She moved slightly to the right, and my boot scraped a stone wall. Here at least might be shelter, although no guidance, for the stone walls of the moor run uphill and down, through stream and over bog, for miles of loneliness, and this might be any one of them that we had happened upon. I turned the mare carefully along it, hoping to find it descend, whereby we might find warmer shelter from the wind, and, straight across our way, we touched what I knew, by the rattle of iron on wood, to be a gate.

'What is it—where is it, my girl?' I said, and there was a shake in my voice as I spoke; and the mare answered it with a low whinny, and laid her neck across the gate, and pushed. I pulled her back and stooped to the latch, and she shook her head with something like vexation and impatience, as though she would say, 'I have brought you home, you foolish human thing, and you have not even the sense to know it.'

And so she had. With most unerring sense and patience she had found her way, and not to her home but to mine, where she knew she must take me first—through bewildering fog, across black night, and almost trackless moorland, by some sense which God gives to horses and withholds from men. And when I doubted her, and thought she had lost her way at last, she was but waiting for me to find and open the gate that led us home.

We passed through and on, down the steep and narrow lane, whose roughnesses had never seemed so homely and welcome to me before. Thankfully I felt round me the cessation of the restless driving wind and rain, and the comparative warmth and shelter of the high bank and hedge. Thankfully I wiped from my tired eyes the chill moisture that hung there, and dried my wet, cold face, and thought of the warmth and comfort that I should reach in a few minutes more. As we descended, the dense black fog grew lighter and thinner, and when we reached my own gate, I could see dimly the comfortable glow from the open door make a path of light upon the mist.

I have ridden the great moor many times, and often since that night; but never again have I trusted myself to its trackless ways, and terrible uncertainties, in darkness or in mist. For, love it always as I do and ever shall, I have learnt at such times to wisely fear and shun it.

A DAY WITH A SEAL

BY GEOFFREY GATHORNE-HARDY

It is no part of my intention, speaking without authority and with little experience, to discuss seriously the ethics of seal-shooting. In spite of every natural advantage with which a careful Providence has supplied them, the numbers of these animals in most localities are rapidly diminishing, and a logical encouragement of their destruction could serve no good purpose whatever; while having fairly won as good a trophy as that which adorns the room in which I am writing, I feel it is unlikely that I shall join in the persecution of seals on any future occasion.

I have been carefully brought up to believe in the rough classification of the objects of sport under two heads—animals useful for food or other purposes when dead, and animals which do mischief when alive; and I am ready to admit that it would be sophistical to include seals nowadays under either category, for the useful blubber is seldom saved by the natives whose perquisite it becomes; and where seals are mischievous, they have already been proportionately exterminated, while, though I have eaten the meat, and should have no objection whatever to doing so again, I hardly think that the practice is sufficiently general to admit of the classification of *Phoca vitulina* as a table delicacy.

But when we look further afield and see that those animals which offer the most irresistible attractions to the sporting instinct, such, for example, as the ibex or the chamois, would arouse neither the enthusiasm of the epicure nor the enmity of the gamekeeper, we may surely confess that there may be exceptions to a generally useful rule, and that the difficulties and discomforts incidental to the stalking of certain creatures may

serve alone as the sportsman's excuse for coveting their trophies. If therefore, in accurately describing a day on an island (which shall be nameless) where seals are in no danger of extinction, I can show these qualifications to have existed, I hope I shall at least escape a hasty classification as an extremely pernicious variety of the degraded genus 'gull-plugger.'

It is a fine September morning. Not a breath of wind moves the tops of the trees which shelter the house; everything promises a thoroughly broiling day. I come down to breakfast animated by a hope that no stern parental fiat will drive me perspiring after the sparsely sprinkled grouse which my unvarying inaccuracy with the fowling-piece has left upon the small but vicious steeps of the island. The warm sun and still air are certain to tempt a considerable number of seals to bask for most of the day on the reefs of Ardskinish, or the rocks to the south of it, and I mean to stalk and secure one before the day is many hours older. Moreover, to-morrow is a post-day, so that I shall be able to send the skin at once to be dressed if I am fortunate in my efforts. There are two post-days in the week, a preposterous number in the eyes of the local postman, which he generally contrives by self-instituted holidays to reduce to more reasonable proportions.

Very shortly after breakfast I am under way with a telescope in its case, lunch in a bag on my shoulders, and a small ·250 American rifle in my hand. This weapon is not for the benefit of the seals, though I firmly believe it would answer well enough, but for any rabbits or other small game which I may encounter in the course of the four miles which are before me, or later in the day if fortune favours my main object early. As I pass through the gates of the carriage drive I come in view of a field which almost invariably contains a few black game, and there, sure enough, is an old cock about a hundred and twenty yards from me, but barely fifty from the buckthorn hedge which bounds the field on the home side. Cautiously I slip back and sneak along the hedge, but the wily old bird has witnessed that manœuvre before, and is off, having either heard or seen me before my stalk has proceeded very far. However, I shall no doubt pursue him or one of his relations with better success another day, so I regard his flight with considerable equanimity and resume my course along the road.

A couple of unsuccessful shots have completely destroyed my bottle-born confidence—pray do not be shocked, the bottle was empty, and a hundred yards from my rifle barrel—by the time

that I have covered about three miles and come up with the dog-cart, where my ·303 rifle is awaiting me in charge of my sister, who has expressed a wish to accompany me on my stalk as far as is possible without risk of putting off my game, as she is anxious to see seals alive or dead at closer quarters than she has hitherto succeeded in attaining. The other occupants of the dog-cart are two incurable golfo-maniacs. One of the miserable victims of this insidious complaint claims my sympathy in deference to the Fifth Commandment, and that of readers of the BADMINTON MAGAZINE as a frequent contributor to its pages on matters unconnected with golf. He is not yet in the acute or solitary stage which drives a man to dig divots from his carpet with a mashie, and break his furniture with (so-called) captive golf-balls, but his behaviour in the presence of another sufferer makes me fear the worst. For the past week he has deserted the moor, and here he will be found to-day, as usual, gazing reproachfully at the rabbit-hole down which eighteenpence worth of gutta-percha has just vanished, or vainly endeavouring to impress on the uninitiated youth of the island the subtle distinction between a putter and a mashie. But I will dwell no further on this piteous spectacle. Let us pass on.

Another mile brings us to our first spying ground—a narrow rocky pass in the hill overlooking the promontory of Ardskinish. Here I remove from my pockets any things which are liable to be spoilt by contact with sea water, and placing them in the lunch-bag, deposit the latter on the ground for the present with my rabbit rifle in a cover beside it. Then seating myself on a convenient stone, I take out my glass and proceed to spy for seals.

A more dreary spot than Ardskinish it has seldom been my misfortune to see. A line of low sand dunes clothed in hard grey bents is protected from the force of the Atlantic by a most inhospitable reef, almost entirely submerged at high tide. A lighthouse just visible on the horizon, far out to sea, is the last vestige of land between these rocks and the Western Hemisphere. To the usefulness of this light the islanders give a valuable testimonial from a somewhat grimly original point of view, 'It's jist spoilin' the place for wrecks!' Yet to the eye of an ordinary landsman the shore is plentifully strewn with masts, spars, and broken timbers, while long bamboo canes and fragments of larger trees than the islands produce testify to the proximity of the gulf stream. A small farmhouse partially concealed by intervening dunes completes the picture.

But to-day this picture is all that greets the eye, and the

telescope reveals no shining backs or wriggling hind-flippers on that piece of the reef which is visible from our present point of view. Accordingly, we move on to the dunes themselves till we reach a place whence a more likely part of the low, weed-covered rocks can be spied, and here, unless I am very much mistaken, we must find our game. And so it turns out, for after one or two sweeps the movement of the glass is arrested by a dark object waving above a rock against the bright background of sea beyond. A second glance confirms what experience has told me, that what I saw was the tail and hind-flippers of a seal, and in another moment I have counted five, lying on a small rock whose weed-covered top is only just clear of the calm water. It will mean a swim for the body if the shot is successful, for the little island is at some distance from the main reef, but a thorough wetting is the inevitable accompaniment of a crawl over these low rocks with their multitude of intersecting channels, and I have never brought myself within range of seals, either to watch and sketch them, or when acting as stalker for a friend, without being pretty consistently moistened throughout.

Certainly no one could reasonably object to seal-shooting on grounds of humanity. Lying as these animals do so near to the water that one kick will probably carry the coveted skin to a depth whence it would usually be impossible to regain it, there is no temptation to the most unsportsmanlike to aim anywhere but at the brain, and this with ordinary luck entails instantaneous death or entire immunity to the quarry.

Between me and the five seals which I have just discovered there are some high rocks where sand leaves off and reef begins, to which both I and my sister have no difficulty whatever in attaining. Beyond them, however, there is promise of an unusually flat crawl before a point can be reached at which a shot would be reasonable, and I have a very vivid anticipation of the effect of the 'juts of pointed rock' which will shortly be searching out the tenderest portions nominally protected beneath a sodden waistcoat during my serpentine progress towards the desired goal.

Behind the friendly shelter of the high rocks I leave therefore the passive spectator with my glass. My course lies first through a large rock pool, quite shallow from an ordinary point of view, but as it has to be traversed at a flat crawl I emerge ready for any depth of sea above which I can manage to hold the rifle, which I am carrying still in its cover.

And now, after worming my way for some yards along a very slight dip in the rocks, mercifully coated with soft seaweed, I come to perhaps the most critical point in the difficult stalk before me. The necessity of keeping out of sight has led me some distance almost at right angles to the direct line between the high rocks and the game, to a spot whence I can return along a channel which is fortunately almost empty at this state of the tide, and thereafter pursue a straighter and more rapid course. But the channel has first to be entered, and, though I have chosen the only practicable point, yet, flatten myself how I will, some part of my clothing, which is fortunately of an excellent colour, must for a moment come into sight of the seals as I drop over the nearer edge of the hollow.

And, indeed, just as I am blessing my stars for the safe accomplishment of a ticklish manœuvre, down come most of the waving hind-flippers, up go all the dark shiny heads, and one great brute gives himself a shove off which nearly lands him in the water. He hesitates on the brink, however, and after some moments of agonising suspense, during which I dare not breathe, while the rock beneath my waistcoat seems to possess a hundred extra and unaccountable angles, all the seals drop their heads once more, regarding me as a curious seismic phenomenon, or regretting the rash and inconsiderate haste with which their last meal was devoured. Fortunately, I am so nearly across that as soon as I am no longer the cynosure of ten amphibious eyes I can drop unostentatiously into the comparative shelter of the channel.

Creeping back along this I come once more into an almost direct line between the starting point and the goal, and here, though the far side of the channel no longer shelters me, the low rocks slope slightly upwards to the spot whence I hope to take my shot. It is merely a question of imitating the progress of the worm for a short time longer. Vain hope! After going forward some distance I find that the desired firing point is separated from me by a strait of sea which the intervening reef has concealed hitherto from eyes kept down so close to the surface of the rocks. Well, there is no other way. I must slip into the sea on my right, and trust that the rock will hide from the eyes of the seals as much of my person as must be kept above the water. Having taken the cover from my rifle, since the goal does not promise much shelter for movements of the kind, I slip in a cartridge and let my feet down into the sea. Fortune is favourable, and with my face bent almost to the level of the calm water

I succeed in wading across without mishap, and sliding my arms and rifle on to the rock raise my head slowly, and lie with a feeling of relief within range of the game, most of the lower half of my body still resting merman-like in another element.

There are the seals, basking without suspicion, and as I watch another swims up and joins them. They lie, not as in most pictures they are represented, with heads up and tails down, breasts to the rock, but in every variety of attitude.

Most are on their sides, looking like great slugs, an occasional lazy wriggle being their only sign of life, save when a fore-flipper is raised in vigorous assault upon one of those parasites from which an amphibious existence does not appear to protect the genus. A friend of mine once irreverently applied the phrase 'a land in which it seemed always after lunch' to a seal-haunted rock, and certainly a group of basking seals is irresistibly suggestive of the lotus-eaters.

Two of the group before me offer good targets as they lie, but they seem to be small, and I can make out brown patches of old hair which spoil the appearance of the skin. The best from every point of view is lying tail on to me with his head held low and hidden behind the line of his broad back. However, better no seal at all than a bad one, so I must wait until he raises his head. This he seems inclined to take his time about, though while I was stalking he seemed ready enough to have obliged me in this respect had I wished it. At last, however, three parts of a small circle rise above the line of his back, and aiming carefully I squeeze the trigger.

Crack! splash! splash! the water round the rock is disturbed, and four seals have vanished, but my friend has resumed his old position with his head hidden from view, and will not move again.

'Accoutred as I was,' except for my coat, of which I have hastily divested myself, I dash into the sea and swim across, while my sister comes from her hiding-place towards the scene, as far as it is possible to pick a comparatively dry way.

But, alas! the disasters of the day are only now about to begin. As soon as, grasping the seal by the hind-flippers, I have dragged it out of my depth, it sinks by the head, and my swimming powers, though sufficient as I know to have dragged the dead beast lengthwise over the sea, are not equal to overcoming the resistance offered to the water by the whole of the body, particularly as that resistance acts only on the side of the

WE SPENT MUCH VALUABLE TIME IN JUST FAILING TO REACH THE LOST BOOT WITH THE GRAPPLING HOOK

hand which is holding the flippers. So after a short struggle I am compelled to take the corpse for the present back to its rock again.

And now it strikes me that shooting boots of gigantic size are hardly conducive to good swimming, so I take them off, and, tying them together by the laces, start back again, holding them in one hand.

> But oftentimes to win us to our harm,
> The instruments of darkness tell us truths,

and though I swim with greater ease and rapidity, better would it have been had I persisted in the old arrangement. As I near the spot whence I fired, the particular 'instrument of darkness,' who rules the destinies of this fatal day, unties the knot, and a wild clutch only succeeds in rescuing one useless foot covering from a watery grave! At such a depth it needs a better diver than myself to recover its fellow.

I go off as fast as bootless feet can carry me over the sharp rocks, to a point on the beach where I remember to have seen a bough of considerable length lying among the other driftwood and wreckage. With this and with the lunch I return, and we spend much valuable time in just failing to reach the lost boot with the extempore grappling hook. The clear water shows it tantalisingly near—in fact, so well can I see it that, as we cease our vain attempts, the crabs surrounding and entering its recesses are distinctly visible.

But time and tide wait neither for the rescue of boots nor for the devouring of sandwiches, and the rising water threatens shortly to wash the dead seal from its rock. What is to be done? There is no time to skin him where he lies. Off I rush again, across the rocks, across the dunes, the bents and thistles stabbing at my bootless feet, to ask at the farm for a rope, which may enable me to drag the body by the heavy end, and thus get rid of a considerable part of the resistance to the water; though, of course, my ideal is a rope long enough to reach the whole of the distance between the seal's rock and the land. A woman comes out in response to my knock; the rest of the inhabitants are elsewhere, working in the corn. After she has overcome her surprise at my appearance, as I stand dripping in stockings and shirt sleeves, she offers me refreshment, which I decline, and then goes to search for rope, returning after a considerable interval with a few short odds and ends of doubtful-looking cordage, with which I am obliged with thanks and apologies to depart.

Returning to the reef, I hastily break off as much of the rope as is too rotten to stand a moderate strain, and, connecting the rest, swim once again to the body, which the water is by this time actually touching.

Here I fasten a loop firmly round the beast behind the fore-flippers, and taking a turn of the other end of the rope round my right hand, enter the water again.

For a while all goes well, and I am complimenting myself on the final conclusion of my labours, when suddenly I feel the touch of the rope against my instep. Unwilling to be entangled, I pause to let the slack sink out of my way, and having accomplished this object resume my former rate. But, alas! I had forgotten a secondary result of this manœuvre. As the rope comes taut again there must necessarily be a jerk—yes, sure enough, the jerk takes place, and the next moment I find myself swimming on with a yard and a half of rotten hemp in my hand. The rope has broken, and my seal has sunk where I cannot hope to reach him, has foundered in fact within sight of port! There are feelings too deep for words, and, besides, there is a lady present. So silently and gloomily I leave Ardskinish, and my 'damp unpleasant body' is soon being whirled home on the back seat of a buckboard, a part of that ingenious vehicle which is not conducive at the best of times to a pleasant frame of mind—but now!

The next day we return with grappling hooks and no ladies, and my brother, a more skilful diver than myself, prepares to perform in the costume or want of it best adapted to success; but the weather has changed, it is bitterly cold, the transparence of yesterday's sea is broken by wind and rain, and though the bottom is searched at various points, that seal, my boot, and the farmer's ropes are never seen again!

However, perseverance is eventually rewarded, and, in the evening of the Saturday following the disaster, a short stalk earned me a successful shot at a good seal, whose body, carried with difficulty to a safe place, I was, owing to various mistakes and misunderstandings, compelled to leave for the night. The next day being Sunday, to ask for native assistance in Sabbatarian Scotland was, of course, as out of the question as to leave the body to the mercy of rats and gulls. Accordingly, in the afternoon I and my brother might have been seen on the road to Ardskinish, both of us attired in our oldest clothes, whilst an unusual protuberance of my coat in the region of my chest testified to the presence of a sack beneath it. Arrived at the spot we carried the

body aside, and although a seal is not so easy to flay as most animals, as the skin will not come away from the blubber without the constant use of a knife, in course of time the deed was done, and we returned home with the skin in a sack, oily, but triumphant. Indirectly we were the gainers, for the natives almost always cut the flippers off, whereas we skinned them conscientiously, and thus even the claws were preserved. And now as I write the beautifully dappled trophy, almost as long as its owner, is proudly displayed upon the floor before me to remind me of the difficulties and catastrophes which ended in its attainment; and which, with the excitement incidental to the pursuit of an animal so well protected both by its senses and its surroundings, may perhaps go far to palliate, if not to justify, an occasional day with a seal.

BILLIARDS

BY FREDERIC ADYE

Of all games, billiards is perhaps the most fascinating and alluring. If not so universally played as some others, this is to be attributed to the expense of its adjuncts far more than to any deficiency in the game itself. Its fascination is indeed unique. Every one who sees the game played desires to play it himself; all who know it find its seductive influence more or less difficult to resist. As a pastime it has few equals and no superiors; as a recreation it stands pre-eminent among indoor games. In this consists its chief value, that it can be played by night as well as by day, and—an advantage not in this country to be despised—is independent of the uncertain climate which interrupts so frequently our golf, tennis, and other outdoor sports. No indoor game can be really so advantageous as one played *en plein air*; but billiards is the only one we possess which in some measure compensates for the lack of outdoor sport by supplying that combination of manual skill, mental judgment and bodily exercise which form the essentials of a good game as understood by Englishmen. Inferior both to chess and whist as an intellectual contest, and of course to any athletic sport in the matter of physical exertion, it nevertheless sufficiently combines some of the best features of both kinds of exercise to account for its wide and increasing popularity.

It is remarkable how a really good game holds its place for centuries, and commands its regular supply of votaries from each succeeding generation. Billiards is an old game, not probably of so ancient an origin as chess, but still of very respectable antiquity, though the well-worn allusion to it in 'Antony and Cleopatra,' where the Egyptian queen is made to propose the game as a

relief for her ennui in the absence of her royal lover, is, we suspect, a sheer anachronism. The first pictorial representation we have of the game is in a book published in 1700, called 'The School of Recreation,' which shows a billiard table of the period—a flimsy affair standing upon four spindle legs, instead of the eight massive understandings of richly carved oak or mahogany which support the modern Thurston or Burroughes & Watts. As might be expected, the game was very different then from what it is now. There seem to have been only two instead of three balls, and a pair of little arches near the centre of the table in lieu of pockets, or hazard-nets, as they were first called. Two players are portrayed, one standing on either side of the table, and apparently playing simultaneously, each trying to push his ball through an arch with an instrument closely resembling an elongated shoe-horn, no doubt the prototype of the modern mace, with which ladies of uncertain age may possibly yet be seen propelling the balls on provincial bagatelle boards. The date at which the cue superseded the mace is unknown, but whenever it was, the immensely superior power of the former instrument must have completely revolutionised the play. Possibly, had the system of the bridge and cue never been introduced, our leading players might have learned to accomplish great things with the mace, though that the game would have been thought worthy of its subsequent development, with the latter as the sole means of propulsion, is not so probable. The mace has for long disappeared from well-appointed tables, but a survival of it remains in the flattened side of the cue butt, which enables a pushing stroke to be used if desired, as occasionally in stringing for the lead, or otherwise playing from the top cushion back into baulk. In playing with the cue, a proper formation of the bridge is of the utmost importance, as is also its distance from the ball to be struck, too long a bridge being conducive to weakness of stroke, too short a one inducing to a certainty a cramped style of play. In this, the tiro should get a lesson from some expert in the game, all billiard players being agreed that a few hints from a high-class player are worth hours of the most patient study of the best manuals of instruction.

A modern billiard table by a good maker is a very handsome piece of furniture, and with its massive frame, solid slate bed, fast cushions, and low bevelled edges, affords a remarkable contrast to the moth-eaten, list-cushioned, wooden-bedded affair of the last century, a specimen of which we sometimes come across standing forlornly on its six rickety legs in the hall of

some quaint old grange or manor, where it forms a convenient receptacle for caps, gloves, clothes-brushes, fishing-tackle, and other paraphernalia which accumulate so rapidly in the hall of every country house. Slate beds were introduced in this country in 1827, since when the chief improvements have been in the quality and shape of the cushions, which seem now to have reached the highest degree of repercussive resilience to be expected even of india-rubber.

Two great drawbacks, which prevent billiards becoming the popular game it deserves to be, are the expense of a good table and the space it occupies when purchased. In ordinary dwelling-houses, even where there is a room capable of accommodating a full-size table without cramping the play in any part of it, it cannot always be spared for such a purpose; so that most persons have to learn the game in public rooms, which are too often less desirable as places of resort than they might or should be. It is all very well when one has a table to play on at some decently appointed club; but in small provincial towns the lover of the game is usually dependent on the public table at the Red Lion, or the Clavering Arms, where the room is usually thrown out somewhere in the back premises, with an atmosphere redolent both of the stable and the adjacent tap; while in country places one often gets no play at all beyond a casual game after dining at some neighbouring house, where the table is too often dull and sluggish from ill-keeping or lack of use.

Yet this need not be so often the case if people would more fully recognise the merits of a miniature table; not of the smallest size, but say 10 feet by 5 feet, or even 8 feet by 4 feet. There is a general impression that this is not the real thing, but it is, if the table is a good one and everything in proportion. Many an enjoyable game have I played and watched on one of these smaller tables, the only drawback to their use being that, after playing upon them, one is apt to feel a little at sea on returning to a full-size board; but this can be no objection where there is no chance of playing upon any other.

The gravest objection to public rooms has now happily been removed in the almost total disappearance of the billiard 'sharp,' once so ubiquitous and engaging in his converse. I have not met or heard of him for years, so can but conclude that he is occupied in purgatory, working out a just retribution by playing, as the Savoy ballad suggested, continually 'on a cloth untrue, with a twisted cue, and elliptical billiard balls.' How many persons, by the way, who play the game, have any idea of the

A LADIES' FOUR

time, labour, and expense involved in the production of those perfect (or nearly perfect) spheres which yield them so much delight! The proper material for a billiard ball is, as we all know, ivory, though on account of the dearness (some 1,500*l.* a ton, I believe) of that article, many are now made of a composition closely resembling it, and are then termed cellulose or bonzoline. Ivory much varies in quality, and only the finer and closer grained is suitable for the manufacture of billiard balls. The best comes from small tusks of four to six inches in diameter at their base. These are sawn into sections, each being large enough to allow of the turning of a single ball. The method of treatment demands the greatest skill and care. The exact centre of the block having been discovered by measurement, it is placed in a socket, and one half of the ball turned on the finest and sharpest of steel edges. When the other half is turned the roughly made ball is hung up in a net for fully a year (by some makers longer), in a temperature of 60 to 70 deg., to get seasoned. Then comes the polishing, colouring, &c.; a great deal of rubbing is sometimes necessary before getting the ball to its right size, which is from $2\frac{1}{8}$ to $2\frac{1}{16}$ inches in diameter. It is very difficult to get two balls of precisely the same size and weight which shall run with equal truth and freedom. Very often they will be found heavier on one side than the other, and not infrequently they split right through the centre in the turning. All this makes billiard balls very expensive, and when one possesses a good set great care should be taken to keep them in as even a temperature as possible. No material can equal ivory for elasticity and durability. When worn, they can be re-turned for a miniature table, and again for the bagatelle board. A set of good pyramid balls, fifteen in number, is therefore a valuable possession, and well worth stealing, as a provincial hotelkeeper once found to his cost. The story, which I believe to be a true one, went that, going one day to take these down from the mantelpiece on which they were kept under a glass shade, he discovered in their place fifteen strange objects, satisfactory in colour, but spherically imperfect, and apparently of a vegetable texture. Not being very sure of what might or might not happen in this world, and being unfamiliar with a certain vegetable now in general use, he thought that he still beheld his pyramid balls under some process of transformation; but on calling in the aid of an expert, discovered that he was the possessor of fifteen fine tomatoes! Some ingenious but dishonest frequenter of the rooms had availed himself of the opportunity daily to substitute a tomato for the more valuable article.

Up to the time, a year or two ago, that an American player named Mannock invented what he called his *Anti-grip* cue, these instruments had been invariably made of ash; but the Mannock cue, manufactured by Messrs. Burroughes & Watts in this country, is of Lycia wood, which affords an absolutely smooth surface. It differs from the old-fashioned cue in being spliced forward instead of at the butt, with the idea that by bringing the weight nearer the bridge greater accuracy and command of the stroke can be obtained. The top of the cue is of elk or buffalo horn, dovetailed into the wood, the claim for this alteration being that the tip can be made to adhere far better than on wood or any other substance; while the inventor's experience also goes to show that when horn of a dark colour is used, the proximity of the cue to the ball can be more accurately determined. Not having played with one of these cues I cannot vouch for its alleged advantage, but believe that experts who have tried it consider it an improvement, particularly for screw strokes.

Billiards, though undeniably a difficult game, is one which, from the pleasure it affords, well repays a little trouble to learn. I encountered this summer a very fine croquet player, who had such command of strength that he seemed able to place his ball just wherever he wished it to be. The very ease with which this was done betokened an inordinate amount of practice, for it is only Ouida's wondrous heroes who do these things, so to speak, 'on their heads.' 'Yes,' acquiesced a friend, 'he plays *all day, and every day*.' This is just the case with billiards, which the lately revived lawn game in many respects so closely resembles. To achieve anything beyond a respectable mediocrity implies a devotion to the game which the amateur cannot, and for the matter of that ought not to, give. Happily there is no necessity for it. The proper function of a game is to recreate and amuse, and this is one in which the tiro, after some amount of practice and a few hints from a skilled player, rapidly attains a degree of proficiency sufficient for the enjoyment of the game. Beyond this he is not likely to advance without devoting himself to it to such an extent as to become practically a professional. For there is no game or sport in which the professional so far surpasses the amateur as in billiards. Whereas in cricket the Gentlemen, at least in batting and fielding, fully equal and sometimes excel the Players; and whereas in aquatics it would take a very high-class waterman's crew to get away from a Leander or London Rowing Club four, while even at tennis and racquets the thoroughly

skilled amateur is to a certain extent 'in it' with the professor, yet at billiards the best amateur has no sort of chance with even a fifth-rate professional player. This immense disparity is obvious at a glance; for whereas the highest professional break (spot-barred) is, if I remember rightly, the 690 made some two years ago by Roberts, there are very few amateurs who can make (all in) a sixth or even a seventh of that number. Few indoor games require perhaps more command of nerve and temper. I like that story of the observant Hindoo, who, on his return to his native country from a visit to England, where he had seen billiards played, defined it as a game in which one man struck a ball with a stick and said 'Hard lines!' and then another man struck another ball with another stick, and said 'D——!' For matches, a certain amount of preparation is certainly desirable. No severe physical exertion of course is entailed, but the strain attendant upon a closely contested game of even 500 up is not inconsiderable, and the nervous system, as we all know, depends largely upon condition. Unless in fair condition, one is apt to go to pieces in the latter hundreds of a long game, even after playing perhaps through its earlier stages in one's best form.

The improvement in the general standard of amateur play immediately preceding and following the establishment of the Amateur Championship (being no doubt both its cause and effect) may be taken as a healthy sign. Not so many years ago it was considered almost a disreputable thing to be a good player, billiards having been for so long associated in the minds of our forefathers with late hours, inordinate cigar-smoking, brandy-and-water, moustachioed sharpers, and gambling generally. These, it should be superfluous to say, are not inevitable concomitants of any game, and I am glad to observe that the social and moral atmosphere in which this noble game is now played is much purer than it was. Space forbidding further dilation in this short paper on a very favourite pastime, I will conclude it by saying that, though I have personally known several very sad and disastrous instances of a complete surrender to the extraordinary fascination of the board of green cloth, described by Frank Smedley as a twenty-devil-power mantrap, yet, from a long and enjoyable experience, I can cordially recommend billiards as the best of all indoor games, a healthy pastime for a wet day, and at any time a delightful relaxation from the cares and worries of a busy life.

FISHING AT THE FALLS

BY EDWARD ROPER, F.R.G.S.

"ARE there any fish to be caught about here, Matt?'

'Is it fish? By the powers thin, it's there you can ketch thim, down beyant there where the water is roughest,' and he pointed to some distant rocks, half-hidden by mist and smother.

'They must be huge ones to stand all that commotion?'

'Faix! you are right; there's big ones there, you bet, and there's little ones too, small wee fishes, you can see through thim; I do be wonderin' meself, frequent, how they live there.'

'What are they? What d'ye call them?'

'Is it call them? Well, thin, there's many a kind, and a many names. Sure there's big black basses—foine fishes thim are; 'n there's rock basses, 'n there's muskilunges—monsthers, some o' thim; 'n there's cat-fishes, as big as a man, 'n there's sturgeons, 'n there's perch, 'n there's mullygudgers, 'n there's stone-carriers, 'n there's herrings.'

'Oh! hold on a bit—that'll do; perhaps there are whales and sharks?'

'Bedad! I wouldn't wonder. There's sturgeon, 'n there's big eels, 'n there's so many, it'd bate me to be afther tellin' you the names of thim all!'

'Have you caught all these? Are they game? Is there any fun in catching them?'

'Me?—Och, I'm guide here, I've no toime for fishin'; but they do be tellin' me that there's an awful lot of sport in some o' thim. To my moind though, there's the most sport in sthickin' to them rocks when a big baste is fasht on yer line! But if it's fishin' ye want, find Sol Simmons, he's the boy for ye—he's a poet too—yes, you bet he is.'

'A poet—'m?—and he can tell me how to get some fun with these wonderful fishes, eh? Where shall I find this poet?'

'Oh! be me faith thin, you'll find him in the town, most anywheres; he does be sawin' wood, 'n doin' chores around; I guess anyone will tell you where Sol is.'

MATT, THE GUIDE

A poet who saws wood and does chores! 'A queer combination,' said I to Matt, who assured me it was true, 'a quare fella,' indeed he was, and if I could hire him to go with me, and provide bait and gear, I might reckon on some sport that would astonish me.

Matt, the guide, is a 'quare' character himself; he has been for many years in the employ of the lessee of the Cave of the Winds; he is a very good fellow, he is a son of Erin, and is, or was, a city councillor. In business hours—when he marches tourists slowly down the Biddle Stairs, then under the cliff, and then through the cave behind the Central Fall, which is certainly a very awful walk; and after that, over the frail-looking paths and bridges, through deafening noise, thick mists, and blasts of hurricane-like wind—his dress is as drawn above; off duty, broadcloth and patent leather are his style.

What can be told new about Niagara Falls? They have been described, pictured, photographed, 'enthused' about—here, and in America—almost *ad nauseam.* But the sport which may

be had there, has it ever been described? For sport there certainly is, of a kind, and surely, only here and there in the world in such an environment, and under such peculiar, not to say awful, surroundings.

In the abyss below the Canadian Fall, into which the immense masses of water have taken their terrible plunge, raising, amidst a deafening roar—equalling a thousand thunders—huge clouds of spray and mist, the river is a swirling, seething expanse; it boils up in angry patches here and whirls in tortuous eddies there. Now it runs rapidly in one direction, now in another, nowhere is it quiet; yet, for some short distance down, it can be safely traversed in a skiff or a canoe.

There is, indeed, no danger within certain limits to those accustomed to the place. To venture down to where the streams unite, to start seriously to the rapids to Lake Ontario, is to court destruction.

Here, in the autumn, come ducks, sometimes in considerable numbers, often right up amongst the spray, the turmoil, and the thunder; and here, in skiffs, painted sea-green, the colour of the water, bold gunners go for them.

It is a wild, a wonderful experience to accompany one of these men on such an expedition. But now I must describe another sport—namely, Fishing.

I was at Niagara Falls one autumn recently. I had seen all the sights, up and down, and across the river, and was resting. The days were hot and sultry, the evenings delightful.

On the cliff top, on the Canadian side, I had a favourite seat, where I passed many an hour enjoying the fascinating scene. My range of vision commanded the rapids above, the Falls themselves, the dead water below them, and down the river to where the railway bridges cross the chasm.

Here, as the sun descended, the spray, the clouds of rising steam, the falling water, and the avalanches of snow-like foam assumed prismatic tints, and rainbows hovered everywhere.

One evening I noticed, through my glass, a couple of men creeping amongst the rocks under the Terrapin Fall, across the river. By-and-by I saw them perched on an outer one, and they appeared to be fishing.

This surprised me, and caused me to ask and hear what I did from Matt, the guide.

Without great trouble I found Sol Simmons, the poet-fisherman. All the residents knew him and his reputation. He was in a back yard sawing firewood when I came across him. At

first he was very taciturn; but when I told him my wish he brightened up. Said he:

> 'You want to go a-fishing at famed Niagara Falls,
> Because you've heard, you say, that there we make great hauls.'

I admitted that such was my desire.

He told me that the wind was suitable, that he had time to dig worms, catch crabs (crayfish), and minnows, and that we must meet an hour or two before sundown on Goat Island. We soon settled all satisfactorily.

Sol Simmons was an American, of course. He had some little education. People assured me, and he said he agreed with them, that he was a 'natural-born genius;' but, he added, that he had always had 'hard luck.' I could not discover that he had ever read much except Burns and Byron. He said he had always 'ambished' literature, and that he knew he was 'brainy.'

He had married young, and had a struggle to live. He chopped wood, hoed corn, dug potatoes, went errands, kept storekeepers' books, wrote items for newspapers, and did 'chores' generally. He had, or made, more leisure than he needed; he occupied it in composing what he, and some others, called poems, of which some had been printed. To the appearance of a mere labouring man, which is all he was, he added the self-assurance of his countrymen. He spoke freely of all things, giving his opinions —often cute, but usually ignorant—on politics, religion, arts, and sciences—now in prose, now in rhyme—seldom spontaneously, never impromptu; he had elaborated them, and brought them out when opportunity offered, frequently most inappropriately. He considered the social habits, culture, knowledge, and power of Americans to be perfect. As for poor old Britain, he felt an interest in her; he liked a few Englishmen, who had lived long enough in New York State to become civilised, but had no opinion of the rest of us.

As for Canadians, who lived across the river in full sight, they were nowhere, in his estimation—'not worth shucks,' said he.

He was a fair example of the half-educated person one meets frequently in that great country, and was an interesting study for a while.

Fishing was his one delight, up or down the river. In the quiet parts he could loll about and construct his poems—where I wished to go was not so pleasant; but he was willing to go anywhere, I found, for a consideration.

Sol sneered at my description of our British methods of taking fish; he called them 'no account foolishness.' I gathered all this in an hour's conversation.

At the office of the Cave of the Winds, then, I met him as arranged, with a bag of bait and lines; he brought two 12-foot bamboo poles. He called them poles; a 'fishing-rod' was not in his vocabulary.

There was quite a gathering to see us start down the Biddle Stairs, which—a yard wide—wind down a central spar; they are boarded in. Matt, the guide, was there, and several loafers. Plentiful were the jokes and jibes at my conductor, yet one could tell he was proud enough to be the leader and instructor of an Englishman.

To them he often perpetrated a rhyme. He did it seriously and with impressiveness, and they looked at one another with wonder and admiration of his cleverness.

Arrived at the foot of the Stairs, more than eighty feet down, we turned to the left along a narrow path, under the overhanging cliff. The view from here of the Canadian Fall, and across the river to the Dominion, is very fine; but the walking was rough and very slippery, and the bank sloped down to the edge of the water too rapidly to be pleasant. By-and-by our course lay clear of the cliff; this pleased me, for I had seen so many pieces of rock that had fallen recently from it that I had not been at ease.

'Oh! I guess there ain't no danger,' said Sol Simmons; 'anyway, we've got to take the chances; I never heard of folks bein' killed here!' Then, after a short time he said,

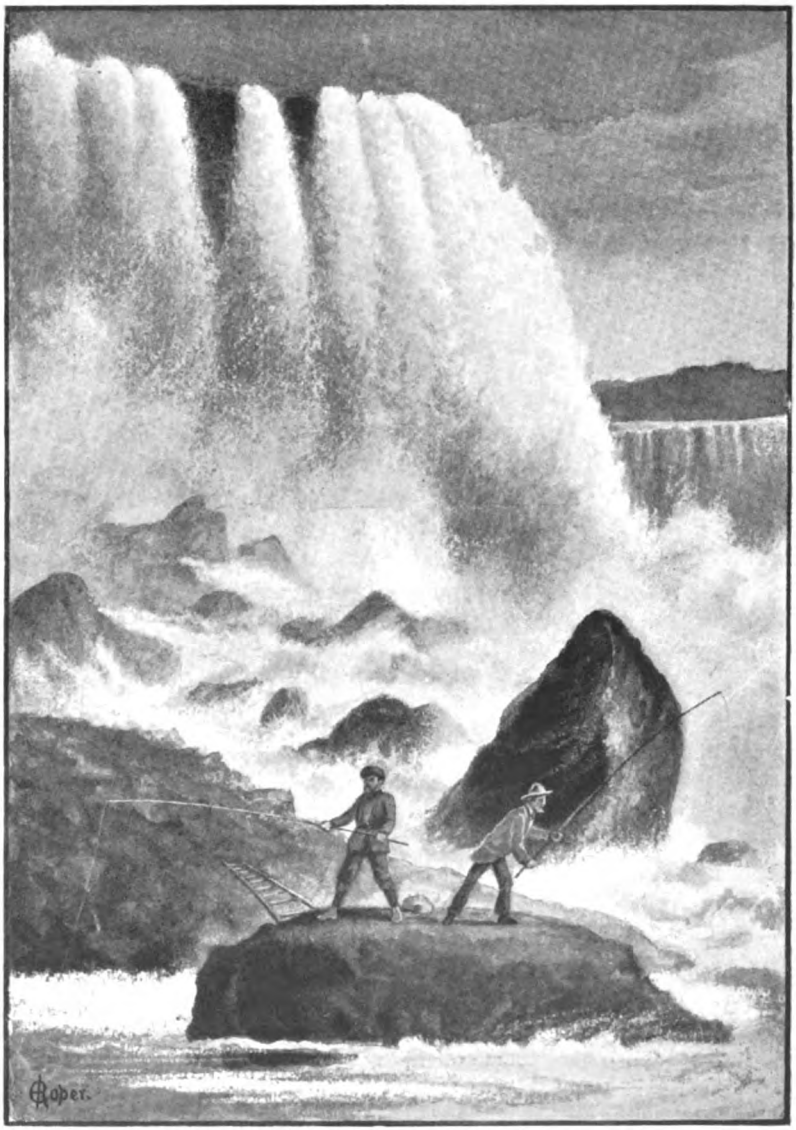
> 'I guess there ain't no danger, there may be heaps of fear;
> We've got to take the chances, we're safe enough right here,'

which is a fair sample of Sol's 'poetry.'

Our progress was anything but easy; over a jumble of jagged broken rocks, piled up in mounds and ridges, we had to clamber, until we reached a comparatively smooth, grassy slope, which led us up close to Terrapin Rocks.

Here the noise was terrific; it was not possible to converse, so we shouted and made signs. Ahead the rising spray was very dense; we could only see half-way up the cataract at times; however, the breeze being from the east, it was wafted clear of our destination.

Pushing on, as near as possible to the Fall, my guide pointed to a large, flat-topped boulder, some distance out in the raging river, and indicated that it was Fishing Rock.



ON FISHING ROCK, BELOW TERRAPIN FALL

My dismay was plain to him. I could *see* his boisterous laughter, which I could not *hear*. He was enjoying himself, I was not. He stripped his coat off, went to the brink, and made motions as if to jump across. It was too much for me.

Between where we stood and this rock was a boiling rush of foam, its speed was terrible; the idea of jumping over was preposterous.

I made him understand that I should not attempt it.

It was only a joke, to 'sell' the green Englishman; for behind a pile of rocks near he had a ladder, which, with some little difficulty, we laid across the chasm, and over this, aided by our stout fishing poles, we safely passed.

For a while the grandeur, the sublimity, the awfulness of our position enthralled me. Overhead the mighty rush of water was surging over the brink in huge grey flakes, which were flung many yards out into space. The low sun gilded their edges, and, piercing many, transformed them into living rubies, sapphires, topazes, and opals.

The Horseshoe Fall was in deep shadow, only a streak of brilliant light touched the upper edge, but all was usually shrouded in ever-rising mist. One bold promontory of swiftly descending snow, close to us, on which the sun struck with great vividness, was glowing in prismatic hues, whilst above all, towering up to, and mingling with, the clouds, was always a column of dense steam, which, as it rose above the pearl-grey shadows, turned now to gold, now to crimson, now to golden fire.

There is no great space on this fishing rock: it may be eighteen feet by ten. It was rough and dry, hence there was good foothold. I sat down, and for a time gazed around with more awe than comfort.

My companion looked admiringly at the scene; he directed my attention to this and that feature, then struck an attitude, and declaimed at the top of his voice what I took to be one of his 'poems,' but I heard little of it. Then he opened his bag, produced his tackle, and fastened the lines on the poles.

They were heavy lines, perhaps ten yards long, with huge hooks, and a chunk of lead tied above them for a sinker. There were no reels, no floats, and the lines were fastened to the ends of the bamboos. It was the clumsiest arrangement possible.

The bait was a dozen big fat worms.

Sol Simmons flung his line as far out as it would reach across the foaming torrent; it drifted quickly into a clearer run, then he drew it out and threw it in again.

I watched him for a time, but I confess I was more interested in our surroundings than I was just then in sport, until I saw his pole bent and that he was grinning at me delighted, and I knew he had a fish hooked, and, seemingly, a big one. Then I, too, was alert.

He did not manœuvre, he did not attempt to play the fish; he simply brought all his strength to bear, pulled mightily, and ,with a sudden jerk, out came the creature. It was a yard long, black and shining; it had an immense head, a mouth half a foot wide, with long tentacles on its lips; its eyes were white. It was a most uncanny beast.

Sol, having struck it a blow with a stone, flung it towards me, with motions of admiration, shouting as he did so: 'It's a cat-fish.'

He went to work again, and I began; he indicated to me where to operate. It was not long before he caught another cat-fish, a smaller one, and soon after I found that I had hooked either a rock at the bottom of Niagara River or a mighty specimen.

It proved to be the latter. I tried to play the thing, to treat it as I should a big fish in Britain, or anywhere else; but Sol, seeing me, threw down his rod and came to me, making me understand that this style of angling would not answer there; that it must be done by main strength only. So main strength we used, and, by-and-by, half-way out we drew a fish which really looked as if it might be as big as I am!

To pull this thing out bodily I considered impossible, and we had neither net nor gaff! It did not struggle nor attempt to get away; it seemed to be jammed between two knobs of rock: there it lay with its head out, its whiskers waving, and its white eyes staring angrily, and as we hauled and pulled, its horrid mouth was opening and closing in such a way that I believed if it were not for the terrific noise around us we should have heard some strange bad language from the disgusted cat-fish.

The sketch on the opposite page is my recollection of the beast.

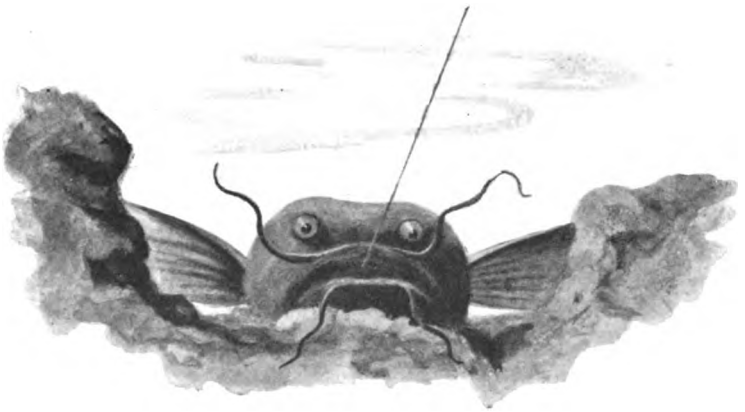
Well, as I say, we pulled and hauled; the hook was far down the horrid throat, and then the line parted; we fell back nearly off the rock—which was alarming—and the fish slid back to liberty! Sol shouted, 'It ain't no odds, them big cat-fish ain't no good, anyway!' He was used to such an ending.

I found, afterwards, that these fish have strong, sharp spines standing out at each side; this prevented our dragging this one out.

Again he yelled to me: 'There ain't no use in cat-fish; let's try for muskelunge.'

I nodded, at which he produced more complicated tackle: double pike hooks on brass wire. On them he impaled a crayfish, which he called a crab. Our lines were lengthened too. He made a cast far out in the river, drew it in, as much as possible across the currents, with some little art, and perhaps knowledge of the water. I watched him until I had confidence, and at my second cast I hooked a fish. It was a fair-sized pike, and out it came bodily, for the hooks held. So far as I could see, it was the same as the English pike.

We took several thus, with two fine black bass, and what Sol called a pickerel; then, with a minnow, I hooked a real muskenonge. It was something like a capture. I perceived that



A MEMORY OF THE BEAST WE DID NOT LAND

it would not be possible to simply drag *him* out. Against my companion's advice, I played it awhile; I became bolder and worked it hard, so that in the end I so tired it out that Sol, scrambling down the face of the rock, managed to hook his fingers in its gill, and so got it safely to bank—a very unhandy and, I thought, risky business.

It was a fine fish, with immense and formidable jaws (see the initial at beginning of this narrative). It weighed fifteen pounds.

It was after the fight with this, the only muskenonge we got that day, that I thought of what Matt, the guide, had said to me about the most sport being 'sthickin' to thim rocks.' During the excitement I did not heed this; but, when all was over, I noticed once more the terrible turmoil, the rushing foam, the torrents of rough water hurrying and eddying around us at light-

ning speed; I realised how fearful it would be if one slipped in. This caused me to make Sol understand that we had caught enough big fish, and that I should like to try for something smaller.

It was becoming dark, too, and I must admit I did not anticipate with much pleasure the journey back. I looked more than once with a tremor at that ladder we *must* cross to get to solid land—in fact, I felt that I had had enough of it.

It was certainly good sport, astonishingly good, and I was satisfied.

Sol Simmons evidently wished for more. He produced a couple of fine lines with small hooks on gut, with many split-shot sinkers. We baited with worms, and from the quieter eddies we pulled out in half an hour a dozen small specimens. Some he called sun-fish—they are like brilliantly coloured dace; an eel-pout; a mully-gudger—very like our gudgeons; several stone-carriers—which I thought like our chub, and a couple of herrings—so-called because they resemble those taken at sea.

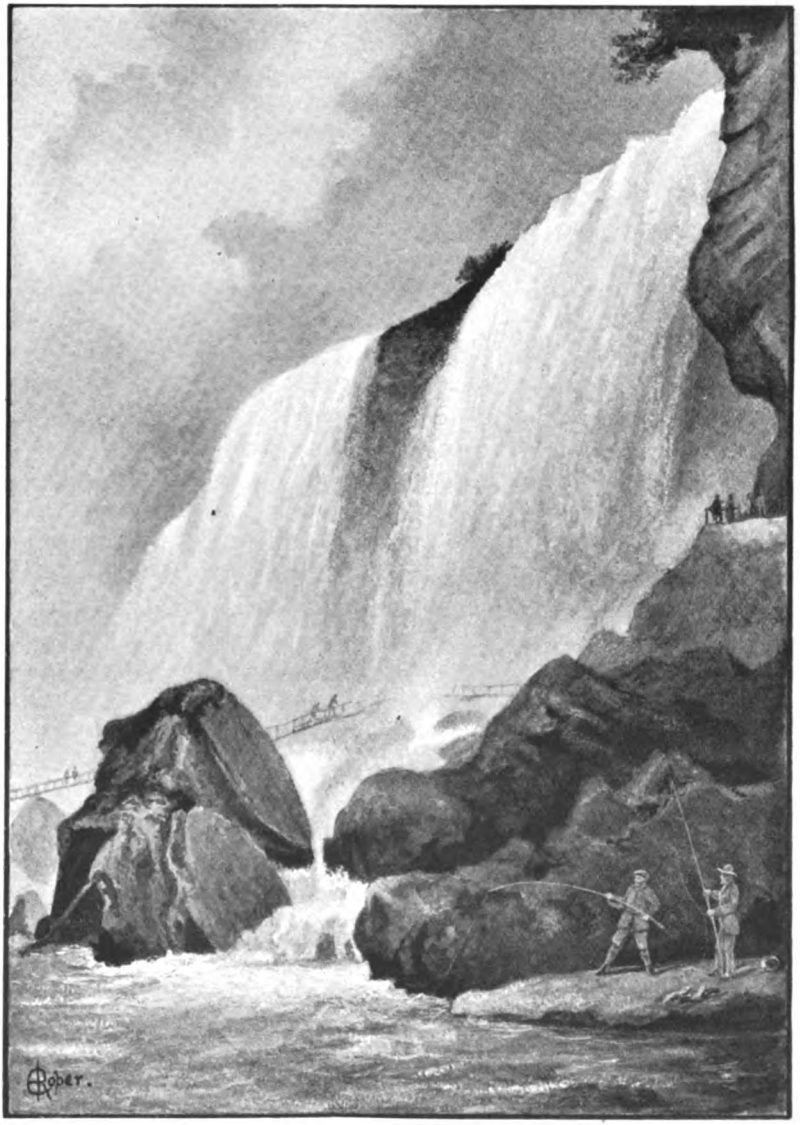
It was then surely time to quit. The fish were strung through the gills in two bunches, and I shall long remember crossing the frail ladder in the half light with our burdens, and I shall never again, I hope, make such a rough journey as we had that night from Fishing Rock to the foot of Biddle Stairs. We managed it somehow, and with many a groan contrived to drag ourselves and our slippery loads up this wretched stairway. At the top I struck, declaring I would carry the fish no further; I did not want any of them but the muskenonge, anyway. But Sol did want them, probably to sell.

It was nine o'clock; the Goat Island Bridge gates were closed, I heard. Only the constable and his family were on the island. My companion desired me to rest here whilst he went for him, so I remained seated on the point, where I studied the grand scene under a fresh aspect.

It was full moon; therefore I witnessed many lunar bows form, dissolve and form again. It was undoubtedly a most interesting scene, but nothing like so beautiful as I fancied it would be.

I had half an hour here, then Sol returned with Mr. Howland, the State policeman, to whom I was introduced. He guards Goat Island's proprieties, clears it of visitors at stated times, and generally, as he said, 'bosses the show.'

I supposed, naturally, that he was an American, until he assured me, with some pride, that he came from Kent, and 'You bet, I'm not ashamed of *that*,' said he.



BELOW CENTRAL FALL, NEAR THE ROCK OF AGES

At his pleasant home his kind wife gave us coffee and crackers, and there I left most of my fish; then the bridge gates were opened and we passed into the town, Sol Simmons to his home there, and I across the Suspension Bridge to my quarters beneath the Union Jack. So I had had some fishing at the Falls, and I was not disappointed.

A few days after this Sol Simmons proposed that we should try another Fishing Rock, one just below the Cave of the Winds. It being much easier of access, and as we could begin earlier and leave before dark, I agreed.

That same afternoon we went down Biddle Stairs again, then turned to the right, soon reaching the place where we must descend the exceedingly steep bank of loose stones and *débris*; at the foot was the rock, our destination. It touches the shore—no leaps or ladders necessary here; still it is frightful enough to an unaccustomed person. It is close beside the Rock of Ages.

The scene here was quite as fine as where we were before, yet it was not nearly so wild, so awful. The Centre Fall came down in grand jets of dazzling foam, almost over us, while its thunder, mingled with the roar of the torrents rushing over the rocks along the base, rendered the noise deafening, the experience unique.

Our position was now nearer the level of the water, and just here the river seemed to be less impetuous; there were wider stretches of calmer water, and the outlook, across the moving expanse, seemed calmer and much less turbulent than at our former station.

Here we had fair sport. Having taken a couple of pike and a few nice black bass, which there was now some chance to play before landing, we put on fine lines and angled for smaller fish. We caught a number, amongst them a few herrings and a white fish. It was but a small one, weighing about a pound. I always supposed these fish were only to be got in the deepest waters of a few of the American lakes, so was much surprised to take one here. They are, perhaps, the most delicious inhabitants of the American waters. I conveyed this one to my boarding-place and had it cooked. It was tasteless; we concluded that at the foot of Niagara Falls it was living an unnatural life.

We had a very enjoyable time there. Matt, the guide, came down to us once, and made a few quaint remarks, and once a party of tourists, enveloped in ugly oilskins, stopped on the bank-top to watch our sport; they had been through the Cave.

We came away before dark, well pleased with our string of fish.

Just before I proposed leaving for Toronto and home, I received this quaint epistle:

Niagara Falls, N.Y., September 3, 189–.

Mr. Solon H. Simmons would be glad to know if Mr. —— will like to have a spell of quiet fishing down the river by Queenston. If Mr. —— is agreeable, I will be at your depôt on Canada side at 10 A.M. to-morrow, and will bring all fixings with me. Telephone reply to me at Toller's Drug Store, where I shall be all this evening. Respectfully,

SOLON H. SIMMONS.

P.S.—We've caught a heap of fishes amidst Niagara's roar,
Let's go to calmer waters and catch a big bunch more.

This was an invitation not to be refused. Accordingly I found Mr. Solon H. Simmons at the rendezvous. Entering a carriage on 'Niagara Falls Park and River Railway,' we were carried down the Canadian side of the river, past the town of Niagara Falls, Ontario, then the Whirlpool rapids, where Matthew Webb took his mad swim and met his death, then by the Whirlpool itself, to Queenston Heights, which are crowned with Brock's monument, thence to Queenston village, where we landed. This journey, of about seven miles, is enchanting, well worthy of all that has been said of it even in the guide books and advertisements we find all over Canada and the United States.

Here we hired a boat, and procured some eatables and drinkables, and then for some hours Sol rowed me up and down and across the lovely river, here quite placid, having only a moderate current flowing to Lake Ontario, about seven miles below.

Sometimes we slowly moved along the American shore, then the Canadian; once we landed for a short rest at Lewiston, seven miles below the Falls, afterwards we did the same at Queenston opposite. For some time we had a line out behind, trolling with a spoon or phantom minnow; but we were not very fortunate, only taking a few pike and a couple of small muskenonge; but later in the afternoon we made fast to a snag, just where the rapids cease near the ruins of Queenston Suspension Bridge, and there we found black bass and perch; and, with worms for bait, took all we wished for.

We did so well, and had such a grand day amidst such very fine scenery, under such a brilliant sky, that I was more than ever satisfied that there is good sport to be had in and about this world-renowned resort; and I am sure that those who care for it may do worse than hire some experienced inhabitant, and try their luck at fishing at the Falls.

COLORADO IN THE SIXTIES: A REMINISCENCE

BY M. O'CONNOR MORRIS

VIRGIL has furnished the educated world with many hundreds of quotations, more or less adaptable to modern times and *fin de siècle* institutions, but I doubt if he ever wrote a line of more general, nay, universal, application to sportsmen of all climes and countries than this one:

Forsan et hæc olim meminisse juvabit.

Yes, indeed! when chalk stones have stiffened joints, and lungs and heart have become enveloped by deposits of too solid flesh—when nerve has become more than dubious, and caution and calculation have gained the ascendency over dash and daring—a few 'purple patches' of successful sporting enterprise, of difficulties overcome, and triumphs achieved (often with the assistance of immense luck) become bright oases in the Sahara of monotonous existence, and gild the routine of civilised life with a glory much akin to romance. Indeed, the sharp contrast between the ordinary pursuits of men 'in populous cities pent,' whether commercial or professional, and the hours of idleness devoted to attempts to follow in the footsteps of Nimrod, that 'mighty hunter before the Lord,' and Esau his improvident descendant, does more probably to enkindle and irradiate the memory than in the case of mortals whose business is hunting, shooting, or

some form of wild life, as in the case of the old 'Borderers' or Border men, of whom Walter Scott tells us:

> Let nobles fight for fame,
> Let vassals follow where they lead;
> But war's the Borderer's game.

The shikarry whose life is one long hunt, and whose faculties are quickened to the highest pitch, can hardly feel the same rapturous joy as the young griff when his first shot from his express rifle has found out the man-eater's vulnerable spot, or even the delicious complacency realised by the undergraduate when he has won his college grind on a hack hunter whose recondite virtues had never been guessed at before. *Hæc olim!* Let us hope that we may be pardoned for the exaggerated views we take (and impart) of those earlier passages in life, more especially when life begins to wane fast, and repetition has become impossible.

I would fain go back in spirit some thirty odd years, when circumstance and will had brought me within the confines of that splendid State of the Union hight Colorado, now an important star in the American galaxy, with a capital Denver, of larger circumference and population than Edinburgh or Dublin, and a metallic output that gives weight to her voice at Washington, but which, in the days I write of, was a struggling territory with a scanty and sparse population, and a tiny rugged capital on the Platte, in which the gambling houses were about the most important institutions. Report and the geographers alleged that some seventy or eighty miles westwards from this capital there were three fine 'parks,' that rejoiced in the titles of the North, South, and Middle or Estes Park, which were grassy wildernesses in the heart of 'the Rockies,' where plough had never penetrated, or the foundations of human habitation been laid, that were pierced by large rivers, fed by innumerable affluents, and that within them all the feræ known in America from the mountain buffalo to 'the grizzly bear,' from the cunning coyote to the puma, known locally as 'the lion;' and that the only towns or villages to be found within their area were those built by the beaver tribe, whose knowledge of hydraulics was perfectly amazing. Now all these vistas of splendid sylvan scenery and sport, however vague and shadowy, are apt to have a powerful effect on the imagination. *Gutta cavat lapidem non vi, sed sæpe cadendo,* and every yarn of trapper or bear-hunter helped to fix the determination to see this paradise of pursuit, and spend some time among its feræ and

fauna; so, 'to cut cackling and come to the horses,' let me state that I attached myself to a company of Americans, who were all imbued with the same resolution as myself, but knew far more about rifles and traps than I did. So, I think, a condition precedent to my admission into their ranks was my purchase of an extra horse for sumpter purposes, and my contributing something extra to the common stock in the shape of coffee-beans, flour, and such-like necessaries of life; for we knew that once outside the zone of semi-civilisation, say twenty miles from Central City—a fast rising mining town—or Idaho, we need have no care about butchers' meat so long as our rifles were held straight and powder, shot, and caps abounded. How long this 'hunt' lasted, whether six weeks or two months, I cannot quite recall, but I do recollect that the climate was perfect—hardly a shower fell—and that fish, flesh, and fowl of the best were to be had for the picking up. In all that time we saw no faces save those of our party, and though we had no books, papers, or even a sporting magazine, we had not a dull moment between trapping, shooting, and fishing; and that the first evening of our 'Hunt' was the only one when commons were rather short, as a ragoût of squirrels was our *pièce de résistance*, and for a long time I drew the line at squirrels, and refused the unnatural banquet, till hunger at last overcame scruples, and then the only regret was that our riflemen had not shot more, for they were delicious. Our return, however, was eventful. One of our party had in a hunting excursion met with a 'Rapahoe' (Arapahoe, to be correct) Indian, who informed him that he was scouting for some Sioux, with a view to a duel between these hostile tribes, and we felt that, whatever the issue of this duel, *à mort* or *à outrance*, our position was not a pleasant one; for the victims in the fray would probably consider us trespassers on their ancestral domains—poachers in quest of prey—and would hardly let us off with a fine such as the capture of our ponies and equipages, even if they spared our scalps. So a council of war was held in our wigwam, our household goods were hurriedly packed on our ponies, and we started for the return journey, having baked some unleavened bread that we hoped would last us for the journey. That was not to be by the way we had come, which was unmistakable, having been 'blazed' by our tomahawks, but by a short cut through mountain passes, in which we were to know our bearings by getting some of the peaks into a focus that resembled a rabbit's head. Whether we missed it through fright or not I cannot say, but we *did* miss it, and wandered for days in an artemisia wilderness, where

the water, impregnated with alkali, made most of us ill, as we had nothing to eat but some strips of 'boucan'd' or dried venison, and we feared firing at the deer we met, on account of the enemy.

The most important event or episode in this anabasis to Central 'City' was the discovery of the famous Colorado sulphur springs, which any one of our company might have annexed for himself by cutting down some of the surrounding fir trees and making a paling of them; if he had done so, he would have been ere this a comparative millionaire; but the blindness of men's minds and intellects has been a theme for poets and satirists ever since the days of Lucretius. We none of us took thought of the morrow, though we all bathed in the thermal waters and felt infinitely the better for the process. Our furs had suffered considerably by these forced marches, and the most saleable thing in our possession was a silver-fox hide, that was too much torn to retain its full market value; but we had tanned and bleached some fine buckskins with the aid of the *yucca gloriosa*, and the only thing I lament now is that I did not preserve a few for Tautz or Hammond, as it would be something to say you had shot, tanned, and bleached the leathers you were hunting in. What our party did with these trophies I do not know, or the amount they realised. I gave them my share, as per agreement, and in a few days, though it was too late by several weeks, we started off for a fresh hunt in a fresh park, so impossible was it to resist the fascination of that nomad existence.

Everything went well on our journey; we reached a river, which we forded in the afternoon (was it the Rio Grande or the Fraser?) and encamped on its banks. Next day, though a rapid stream, it bore a skater or a walker. This illustrates the climatic conditions in those high latitudes; but, save in a snow-storm, the sun was always in evidence towards noon and filled everything with light and heat. I think we had hardly made our camp or shanty of such materials as came to hand readily when we went forth to prospect, though *sans* rifles, when, walking in a stately fashion towards us and within seventy or eighty yards of us, in one of those sylvan aisles into which the trees formed themselves, was a huge wapity (they call it 'elk' here), who seemed prospecting like ourselves down the snow-flecked avenue. He looked steadily at us for a minute or two, then turned round and trotted off—but such a beast! He looked as big and round as a prize ox, with a head almost as beamy as those of the extinct *Megaceros hibernicus* that are found in peat mosses in Ireland;

his colour was very dark, and the tufts of hair on his brisket were black as those of an Andalusian bull. I think I recollect saying that I'd give horses and camp-furniture to get that wapity's head, for before or since I never saw anything approaching it.

Two days after this one of 'our crowd' came to camp with information that he had seen a herd of wapity entering a sort of vast paddock, overlooked by rocky walls that enclosed it like a colosseum or colisseo, to use the Portuguese term. We climbed the colosseum and found a quasi 'box' ready for us, that commanded a herd of many hundreds, of which our acquaintance of the other day was evidently the patriarch and over-lord. He packed them all in a circle, and went round that circle butting every young buck who dared to break the line. Of course I drew a bead on him, but was not allowed to fire, as my friends wanted calves for leather and kitchen purposes. How long we gazed at this magnificent sight I dare not say, probably not more than three or four minutes, when the herd got our wind and a *sauve qui peut* followed. We went down too, and one of our party got a shot at an antelope that it took several bullets to finish. Where the main body of wapity went to I know not, but I chanced a long shot at one who swept through the wood at full speed, my mentors disapproving wholly of the proceeding as wasteful and unsportsmanlike. We all fancied he had been missed, but about three hundred yards further on we found him dead—a good buck of about twenty stone, with a fair head.

Soon after this episode one of my feet got frostbitten, so, as hunting was over, I had to turn cook; nor was the job difficult, when you had several deer hanging up frozen behind your camp to make soup and stew of. The end of the muckle hart was curious. He had led his herd into an osiery, when one of our riflemen blazing at a hind *killed him by mistake*! I preserved his head and hide as best I could and brought them to the foot of a pass, where I had to leave them, as my horse kind were too exhausted to take them further; nor were they likely to regain condition, as hay and corn were value for a dollar per pound in Central City owing to the cold snap. I never heard how 'our Fur Company' fared after my departure in trapping mink and marten, for I soon turned eastwards for the regions of the Buffalo migrations. May I add that I never tasted better coffee than we had every morning for breakfast? for we roasted the beans in a frying-pan, and when our mill got lost, ground them in a bag by beating them with a stone on a rock or boulder.

A PLEA FOR THE FINE-WEATHER SPORTSMAN

BY G. H. JALLAND

Weather Wisdom

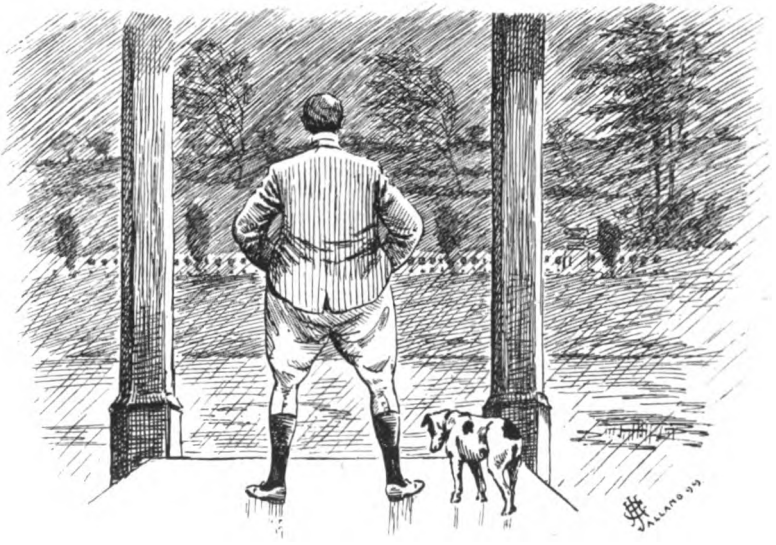
A southerly wind and a cloudy sky
** *May* proclaim a hunting morning.**
But I don't heed the mad 'proclamation,' not I!
To my pet easy chair and the fireside *I* fly,
** 'The horn' and the rest of it scorning.**
To the wind and the wet fools may show a brave front,
But I'm happy to say I am not in the hunt.

Punch's Almanac, 1894.

'BAH!' exclaims the reader; 'the man who wrote those lines was no sportsman—anybody who prefers the fireside to a day's hunting in any sort of weather is not worthy of the name. Nothing short of hard frost should stop one going out.' Yes; there is no doubt this sentiment sounds very sporting, and we say the man who thus expresses himself is a sportsman to the backbone; but as the years canter on, the writer must confess to a growing sympathy with the other man, who is not ashamed to stay at home or leave hounds when the day promises nothing but misery and disappointment.

A really fine rider to hounds, one who can hold his own with

the best, on being chaffed by his friends for having missed a fast thing (they said it was twenty minutes, but in reality it was only ten—these bad day gallops are always grossly exaggerated) through staying at home on an apparently impossible day, answered: 'I hunt entirely for pleasure, not as a business.' There you have it. Hunting *is* a pleasure; when you make a profession of it you are little better than a slave. There are hundreds of men in this country who would consider it nothing short of a disgrace if hounds hunted and they failed to come up to the scratch owing to the weather. Surely this approaches preciously near to slavery. Others there are who even go further, and look with contempt on



THE SAME DULL SODDEN CLOUDS

such aids to comfort as mackintoshes or knee-aprons. Truly we are a hardy race! In the humble opinion of the writer there is no comparison between the pleasures of feeling soaked and keeping dry; but every man to his taste.

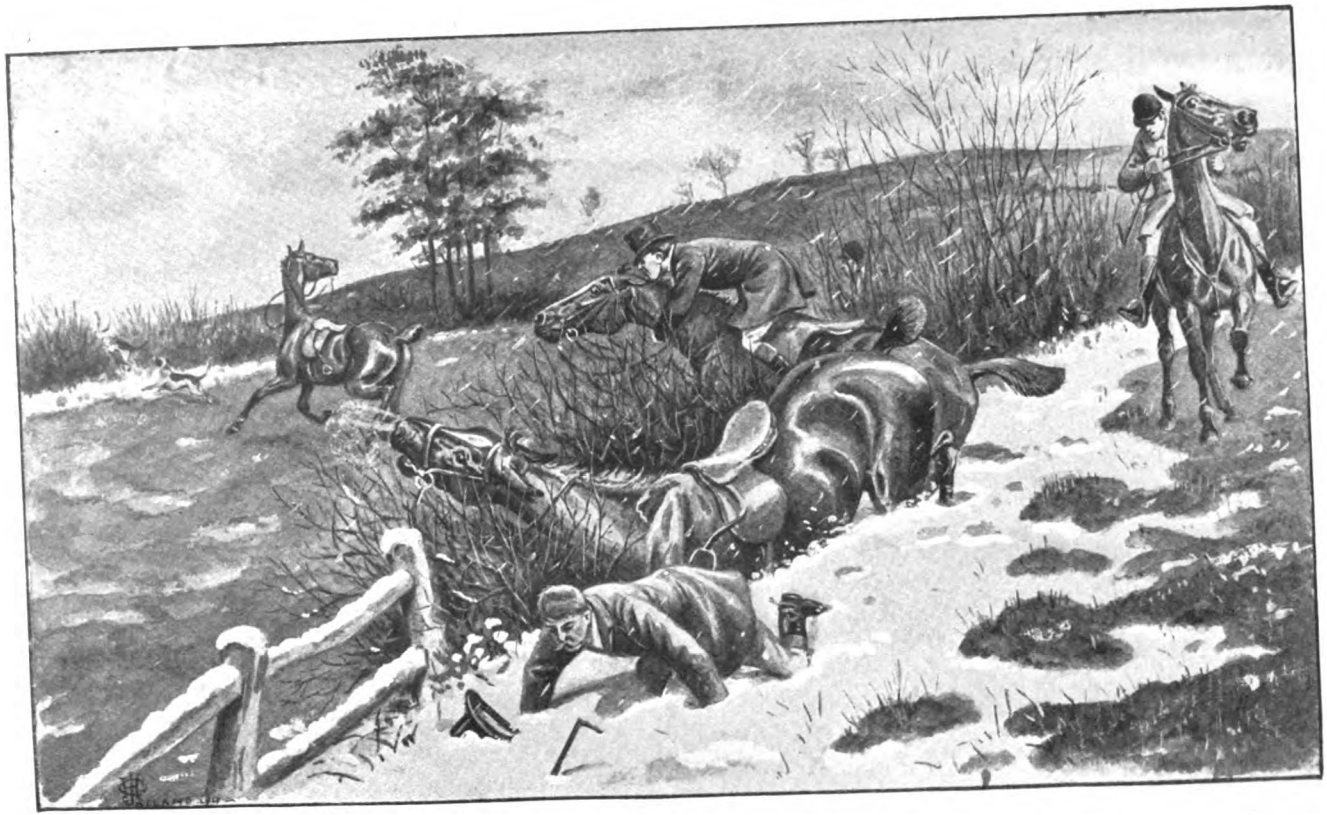
Of course a little rain hurts nobody, nor should such trifling discomfort mar anybody's enjoyment; but there is rain and rain. 'Ever let rain keep you at home?' Yes, the writer must confess rain *has* kept him at home. There are times in this country of erratic weather when it pours steadily and almost continuously for days together. For example, you may have been out the first day of such a spell and arrived home thoroughly drenched; you arrange your mount or mounts for the next day, hoping for a

change, only to find the same dull sodden clouds greet you in the morning; it still rains. You put off starting till later, trusting the storm may wear itself out, but noon sees no break in the depressing outlook. You wait on, thinking hopefully of the old saying about the influence of the time between one and two; still the downpour continues with unabated pertinacity. No go! You give it up, and you can safely congratulate yourself on having escaped a day of absolute discomfort in the saddle. On the other hand, you may possibly have missed a gallop. Put them in the scales!

Had you faced the weather: to begin with, you would have had a nasty ride to the meet, for horses hate heavy rain, few go kindly

ALMOST UNRIDEABLE

in it, and some can hardly be made to travel with it full in their faces. Hounds arrive at the fixture in a thoroughly dejected condition, with sodden coats and drooping sterns—for they, too, loathe wet weather. 'Beastly morning!' says the Master. 'Beastly morning!' echoes the field from the depths of the upturned coat-collars. Covert after covert is drawn blank. Foxes prefer to go hungry and keep dry—no foraging for them on a pouring night! The earth stopper might have saved himself his early morning's labour. The damp assembly move from draw to draw, laying up a store of rheumatism and cursing the weather. Few, if any, garments worn in the saddle are proof against a thoroughly determined rain. You may



EVERY DITCH IS A PITFALL

think you are getting on capitally for some time with your patent leggings or your coats of unpronounceable names, but when rain has once made up its mind to get at you, it may be depended upon to carry out its fell purpose, even if it is compelled to resort to disobedience of natural laws and run uphill. However well protected you may imagine yourself, wet you must become—if not all over, then in isolated and uncomfortable patches, and really it is better to be thoroughly wet than in this instalment fashion.

If you are lucky an artificial earth and a terrier may produce the much-needed fox; if there is a scent (seldom the case when storms are about) you may have a run. Now for the pleasure of riding on such a day! Your reins feel like freshly caught eels, and your saddle is wretchedly uncomfortable. The plough land after twenty-four hours or more of heavy rain is almost unrideable, unless your horse is three or four stones above your weight, and badly-drained pasture is even worse. Every ditch is brimming full and banks are undermined. The take off is treacherous and the landing up to the knees. If the run proves a good one, and the following day your mount shows no signs of sprains, he is a very sound animal.

Another typical day when the fine-weather sportsman prefers to remain at home or leave hounds early, is when snow and sleet are having it pretty much their own way—frost is by no means essential to make this day one of misery, for more often than not it is entirely absent. Last season presented several charming examples of what is meant. A depth of sloppy dirty snow greets you from the breakfast-room window, and the drip, drip sounds continuously from the choked gutters overhead. 'No frost! hounds are certain to hunt!' It snows gently but persistently all the way to the meet, with an occasional shower of cutting sleet for variety. Oh, yes, there's a lot of snow about, but the going is all right for hounds, so hunting is proceeded with. Scent is, as anticipated, absent or exceedingly catchy; the snow 'balls' on your wretched horse's feet, and he stumbles and flounders all over the place; every ditch and rabbit-hole is a pitfall, and the plough takes on itself a consistency of glue. Added to this, particles of snow creep up your sleeves, down your neck, and through every conceivable aperture in your well-buttoned attire; your miserable mount is almost perished with the wet biting cold, for the pace necessitates much standing about. But good runs in snowstorms are on record, so the field holds on in hope.

With a keen master hounds are often out during a frosty

season, when it would be better for them and their followers if they had remained in kennel. It is cruel work on hounds' feet and horses' legs when the ground rattles like macadam and every fall means a bad one. But you can never tell before you start hunting after a sharp night's frost whether or not it will be 'goable' where hounds are meeting. Frosts are often very eccentric and partial in their visitation, the hill country may be quite unrideable, while at the same time the vale, less than six miles distant, is excellent going; and *vice versâ*. Again, a few hours of sun or a shower of rain, particularly towards the end of the season, often makes a tremendous difference. We may have

WILL PLUNGE AND FOOL ABOUT

skated and slipped all the way to the meet, blaming ourselves for having been such fools as to have come out, and yet enjoy one of the best things of the season before we return home. To be on the safe side, it is the safest plan on days of this description to go to the meet (a trifle late if you wish) and see what is about to happen. If hounds are hunted, and the ground is of the nature of bricks, for the sake of your horse and your neck return home. On the other hand, if the going is palpably improving you are there to see what there is to be seen.

But the days of all others when both enjoyment and sport are out of the question are those when 'Rude Boreas holds his sway.'

'Take not out your hounds on a very windy or bad day,' says the immortal Peter Beckford, giving one of the best pieces of advice offered in those famous 'Letters to a Friend.' But nowadays who ever heard of a pack staying in kennel for wind? Blow high, blow low, it makes no difference to the regularity of the hunting days; it never stops sport, such as it is, but it certainly prevents hounds from killing foxes. Take a sample day of this description and see what happens. As your horse leaves his comfortable stable you can see his coat rise on end the moment the rugs slip over his quarters; his tail is tucked tightly home, and he arches his back like a cat. Poor brute! he knows what

STANDING IN WHAT SHELTER YOU MAY FIND

he will have to suffer with his unprotected skin! Animals all dislike strong, chilly winds, and the quietest horse will plunge and fool about on such a day. You ride to the meet cramming your hat on tighter and tighter till a headache results; arrived there, the betting is that the first man who greets you will say, 'We shall do nothing to-day!' He knows it, you know it, hounds know it, the foxes even know it. Then what on earth have you come out at all for? To give your horse a cold and spend a day of misery? Hounds enter cover in that spiritless manner which tells the huntsman what little likelihood there is of any hope; some even decline to leave his horse's heels, but

skulk along with coat on end and down drooping sterns. A fox is halloaed away at the far end, but the noise of the wind prevents the huntsman hearing in time to get hounds away on decent terms. They speak to a line in covert, but in the wind-swept open they affirm the fox has travelled a hundred yards below where he was viewed; slowly they puzzle along; suddenly off they tear, to be as quickly stopped by cries of 'Ware hare!' Back they come, only to make the line good for another field, when the hare performance is repeated; and so on till the huntsman gives it up and draws for another fox. If he finds one, the tedious business of losing him is gone over again; hounds couldn't kill him if he had a leg missing. So the day's 'sport' will have consisted of walking or jogging about exposed to the fury of the merciless wind, or standing in what shelter you may find in cover or behind farm buildings and haystacks, shouting conversation with your friends, who are fairly certain to be, like yourself, out of temper. No! On such days you and your horses are much better at home, for of sport you will assuredly have none. Even a pipe and a book are better than utter discomfort and a bad temper. Somerville knew what he was talking about when he wrote—

> When ruddy streaks
> At eve forbode a blust'ring stormy day,
> Or low'ring clouds blacken the mountain's brow,
> When nipping frosts, and the keen biting blasts
> Of the dry parching East, menace the trees
> With tender blossoms teeming, kindly spare
> Thy sleeping pack, in their warm beds of straw,
> Low-sinking at their ease. . . .
> . . . . . .
> These inauspicious days, on other cares
> Employ thy precious hours.

'Yes, that's all very well, but I have no "other cares" with which I could "employ my precious hours," and nothing on earth to do but hunt; besides, one never knows what may happen on the most unpromising days, so I much prefer to risk a little discomfort on the chance of a good gallop; and in any case I would rather be in the saddle than loafing in the house!' So a number of my readers may possibly retort. Well, this is a free country, and every man to his taste! This short article has not been written for the purpose of dissuading men from following their inclination, but rather to state a case for the other man, and give a few reasons why he may be excused for staying at home if he wishes.

NOTES

BY 'RAPIER'

SPORT is valuable from many points of view, and I have no doubt that many soldiers now in the Transvaal are experiencing the benefits of their apprenticeship to, and practice of, the Englishman's favourite pastimes. Now it is that the man who has been accustomed to ride across country turns to advantage the skill and knowledge he has gained; that the stalker and big-game shot has reason to congratulate himself on his acquaintance with those pursuits, and indeed that the readiness of resource and quickness of apprehension which come from the cricket and football fields are turned to good account. For some weeks past it has been a study in physiognomy to note the faces of soldiers whom one has met racing or shooting, when asked the question 'Are you off?' The joyful response 'Yes, next week!' or the melancholy 'No, they won't have me,' shows the spirit in which the war is regarded, and makes one incidentally wonder who the people are who read the *Daily Chronicle*, with its ardent worship of the Boers, and mean depreciation of the gallantry, as of the honesty, of Englishmen. Personally I cannot very highly esteem African troops who

use the flag of truce as a trap, and deny water to women and children who are dying of thirst; but of course there is no accounting for taste, and trifles like these do not interfere with the *Daily Chronicle's* adoration of its friends. There are some foreign papers—the *Libre Parole*, the *Petit Journal*, *L'Intransigeant* and others—with whose editors a gentleman would be exceedingly loth to shake hands, even with the thickest gloves on; but I regard these as worthy journalistic comrades in comparison with the editor of the *Daily Chronicle*.

—•••—

With the New Year certain changes are being made in this Magazine—changes, as I hope, for the better. For various reasons during the last year or two I must confess to having occasionally made use of illustrations which have not satisfied me; and I hope and believe that readers will, for the future, find a great improvement in this particular. For one thing the present cover is to disappear. It seems the fashion of favourite magazines to alter their covers, and henceforth a different picture will be provided for every month in the year, though the lettering will remain the same. Another fashion which I find to be very popular is that of starting competitions, and I have in contemplation something of this kind. In the January number a prize will probably be offered for the best photograph of a sporting subject, and other ideas which I hope will gratify the staunch body of friends whose support the Magazine enjoys will be developed. No change is contemplated in the editorial department, but henceforth the BADMINTON is to be published by Mr. William Heinemann of 21 Bedford Street, Strand, to which place my office will be removed. Here is a reproduction of the cover that is to be used for the January number.

I propose in the January number to publish an article on the principal features of the past racing season, and so I shall not go into the subject now at any length. We may console ourselves with the knowledge that there is in training a really good horse in Flying Fox, whose unquestionable supremacy is not a little comforting in these days when Colonial and American importations win such a large share of races; and we should have had another in Cyllene, had he not unfortunately broken down—it is impossible to forget the magnificent style in which he won the Ascot Cup. If Flying Fox's wilfulness does not interfere with his performances, there ought to be a grand year before him. Those who derive gratification from a controversy which can never be anything more than a matter of opinion may argue as to whether he is or is not as good as his grandsire Ormonde. The one thing certain is that he has shown himself practically an immeasurable distance in front of all opponents. As to the two-year-olds, I greatly fear there is nothing like a Flying Fox among them, though it is true that a twelvemonth ago there had been no reason to suppose that he was the horse he has since shown himself to be. Every Christmas time frequenters of Newmarket and other training grounds have in their eyes yearlings—coming two-year-olds—which seem to promise great things. I have seen several charming young horses lately, but experience shows how frequently their charms disappear when they come to be galloped, and it is a good deal too early to guess what these animals may turn out.

The Grand Sefton Steeplechase was quite a miniature Grand National with its seventeen starters, though the race is perhaps not a very satisfactory one, as it is understood that usually several of the field are not quite ready. The National winner Drogheda seemed to be so, however, and his friends evidently had the utmost confidence in him, in spite of his 12 st. 5 lbs.; but impartial critics are not all so convinced of the goodness of this horse as his connexions appear to be. There had been nothing in the previous performances of the five-year-old, Hidden Mystery, to suggest that he was likely to win in this class, even when aided by the light burden of 10 st. 2 lbs., but the sons of Ascetic have a wonderful capacity for chasing. He is evidently a better animal than was supposed, and his rider, Mr. H. Nugent, is to be greatly commended for the skill and judgment with which he handled the animal. We are badly in need of gentle-

men riders, and here is one who seems likely to make a name for himself. He shows the value of having been brought up in a good school. Lord William Beresford is obviously going to be very dangerous this winter with his 'chasers, which are certainly to be well ridden by his jockey, W. Taylor, and it is satisfactory to know that Lord William proposes to carry on the game with energy, as fresh blood is sadly wanted in the ranks of owners of cross-country horses. These owners, however, have a great difficulty before them in finding animals to carry their colours All the first four in the Sefton came from Ireland, where they certainly have the capacity of producing good jumpers. They also charge for them, and no one is to suppose that horses are to be bought cheaply across St. George's Channel, as there is a rush to get hold of anything that appears to be a little out of the common—and not seldom it is proved that a very false estimate has been formed of their class and ability.

A correspondent writes to ask whether I think he would improve his shooting by going to one of the shooting schools and practising at clay birds. I should think it very probable that he would do so; but a good deal would depend on him and on his instructor. One often sees little tricks and awkwardnesses in the shooting of one's friends, which one naturally has not the impertinence to mention; but if one goes to a school it is the business of the man in charge to point out such things, the correction of which should have good results, and the man would also most likely be able to tell whether a gun did or did not fit its owner. My correspondent says he does not 'see how a clay bird can be made to resemble and fly like one of flesh and feathers.' I believe, however, that some singularly ingenious traps have been devised for projecting these clay targets, and shooting at them is in many ways much the same thing as shooting at the bird itself. Another thing has to be considered also. One often hears men declare that there are certain shots that they can never bring off. Sometimes they find it hard to kill—that is to say, they generally miss—birds going to the right, or to the left, or away from them; and in an ordinary day's shooting the creatures may not amiably provide the sportsman with just the sort of shots he would like to practise. The clay birds, however, can be sent in any direction, so that he can have a good turn at just the variety of shots which it is desirable

that he should try. Men who get into the way of distrusting their powers at certain shots do not really give themselves a fair chance; they think they are not going to kill their bird, and that is very often the reason why they don't kill it. On the whole, I am inclined to believe that practice in the school is likely to have beneficial results.

With regard to guns, by the way, a very serviceable hint to sportsmen is afforded by the recent prosecution and conviction of a Strand tradesman who sold a gun bearing the name of a well-known maker who was innocent of its manufacture. The defendant admitted the offence, but—simple creature that he was!—did not know that he was doing wrongly! He has had to buy knowledge at the cost of about 100*l.*, not counting the injury to his reputation and business. What is called a 'cheap gun' is, in fact, usually by far the dearest in the market; though I am quite aware that really excellent weapons can be bought in Birmingham from certain reputable makers—if one knows to whom to apply—at considerably cheaper rates than one usually pays at the most famous London shops. A gun, however, from one of the noted London makers is generally well worth the price asked for it; the buyer knows with whom he is dealing; he can have implicit confidence in his weapon, and as a rule it is really cheapest in the end to go to the best shop.

Without very good evidence, I confess I should have been unable to credit an incident which happened the other day at Norwich; but this evidence has been overwhelmingly furnished, and the thing unquestionably happened. The Norwich riding-school is entered by a door, certainly not less than 6 ft. 3 in. in height, and above this there is an aperture of barely three feet. The charger of an officer in the 7th Hussars was going round the school the other day, with no one on his back, when suddenly, instead of turning the corner, he went straight for the door, tucked his head between his legs in what is described to me, and must certainly have been, an extraordinary manner, and jumped out into the yard. The landing is on some flat stones, he slipped and came down on his side, slightly bruising himself, but doing no harm, and is now as well again as ever. When one

comes to think what 6 ft. 3 in. means, and the manner in which the horse had to screw himself up in order to get through the aperture, the performance is certainly nothing short of marvellous. I saw the place the other day, and the incident was described to me by the owner of the charger and by Captain Dibble, the riding-master, who was in the school at the time. I am sorry I had not conveniences for obtaining exact measurements. Captain Dibble, however, made a trooper, who was 5 ft. 9 in. in height, stand with his back to the door, and the woodwork was certainly a good six inches above his head. If this horse jumps as well with a man on his back as without, it ought to take something out of the common to stop him.

Mr. Abel Chapman writes to me: 'Dear Rapier,—Respecting bull-fighting and your remarks thereon, will you, with your accustomed fairness, allow me to put forward another view? You speak of the "wretched bull being taken into the arena to be first tortured and finally killed," contrasting that with the fact that the animals and birds which we pursue in England have their speed or cunning to aid their escape. Now a Spanish fighting bull is a magnificent animal of five to seven years old, full of fight and certainly not lacking in speed or resource—sometimes cunning, to boot. And beyond all that he is endowed with a ferocious courage, and with death-dealing weapons, together with the power and the will to use them. To face him single-handed in the arena, and to kill him with the sword, are, I submit, achievements not lightly to be undertaken. A large percentage of men acquire fair degrees of skill with even the highest-flying pheasants; but what proportion would tackle the bull—with instant death as the price of failure? I am not seeking to exculpate the undoubted cruelties—especially to horses—involved in bull-fighting, nor to ignore the shady side. But let us at least be just, and give the Spanish matador and banderillo their due credit for splendid pluck, an iron nerve, and a skill that none can see and yet doubt. Your remarks applied, I know, to the wretched fiasco in Paris; and bull-fighting in France compares no more with the real thing than could a French *chasse au renard* be likened to our foxhunting in the shires.'

JUN [illegible] 191[illegible]